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Bridge, William, 1600?-1670.
The works of the Rev.
William Bridge

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THE WORKS

OF THE

REV. WILLIAM BRIDGE, M.A.

FORMERLY FELLOW OF EMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN GREAT YARMOUTH, NORFOLK.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
E. PALMER AND SON, 18, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1845.

SYNOPSIS OF THE WORK.

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The Great Gospel Mystery of the Saints' Comfort and Holiness opened and applied from Christ's Priestly Office.
Satan's Power to Tempt and Christ's Love to and Care of his People under Temptation.
Grace for Grace, or the Overflowings of Christ's Fulness received by all Saints.
The Spiritual Life and In-being of Christ in all Believers.
Scripture Light the Most Sure Light.
The Righteous Man's Habitation in the Time of Plague and Pestilence.

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THE PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE Publishers feel much pleasure in being able to assure their friends that in this first collected edition of the works of William Bridge, there is contained in it, without doubt, the whole he ever published.

When at the particular request of several respected individuals they first devoted their attention to the work, although by their business they are much acquainted with the publications of the Puritans, they had the idea that the two generally known quarto volumes, entitled, "The Works of the Rev. William Bridge;" contained nearly all he had written: and there not being in existence any authentic list of his writings, they much fear that this edition would have been far from complete, had it not been for the very valuable assistance rendered throughout the publication by their esteemed friend Frederick Silver, Esq., who certainly possessed the most complete collection of the original editions, and who voluntarily surrendered them all for the purpose of reprinting herein.

Several other friends have also kindly aided the work in its progress; amongst whom they are permitted to mention the Rev. Dr. Bliss, the Rev. Prebendary Horne, Joshua Wilson, Esq., Thomas Jolley, Esq., A. Hanbury, Esq., W. Pickering, Esq. The Trustees also of the British Museum, and the Trustees of Dr. Williams's Library in Red Cross Street.

To his Grace the Duke of Manchester they were indebted,

also, for the information as well as the loan of two single Sermons which could not otherwise have been obtained.

The Publishers beg thus openly, both for themselves and on the part of their readers, to express their grateful acknowledgments of the valuable assistance which was thus kindly rendered, and which has thus made the edition in every respect complete.

It will doubtless be observed, that there is not included a work under the specific title of "Seven Sermons on Faith," which was first sent out with that designation by the Countess of Huntingdon, and which has since become a very popular book. This volume was made up of the first and last sermons of the work entitled, "A Lifting up for the Downcast," accompanied with the three smaller pieces on the same subject which follow that work in this edition. It may be presumed, that as in that disjointed state it obtained so much approbation, the whole of the work, and indeed the whole of the author's works, of which it may be regarded as a specimen, will gain a still greater share of esteem.

The "Word to the Aged" was published anonymously, and was also privately printed. Independently of the similarity of style and the circumstance of one or two similes being repeated in this work which the author had employed in his earlier writings, and which would be sufficient proof that it is a genuine production of William Bridge, it may be added, that in one brief biographical account of him, it is assigned to him without any doubt.

A sermon entitled, "Joab's Counsel and King David's Seasonable Hearing of it," was published in 1643, with the name, "W. Bridges, Preacher of the Gospel at Dunstan's in the East," as the author of it. Although the Publishers could not discover that William Bridge was ever connected with that parish, and although the name also was spelt differ-

ently, a circumstance not unfrequent in those times, they had nearly concluded that it must be his production, from an allusion in the preface to his controversy with Dr. Fearne. Further investigation, however, brought to their view two other pamphlets by this same W. Bridges, and in one of which, entitled, "Division Divided, or Ruin's Forerunner Discovered and Decyphered," he has signed his name at the end of the preface at large, Walter Bridges, thus settling the point as it respected all the three which were then of course all passed by.

One pamphlet, however, entitled, "The Loyal Convert," has the author's name, W. Bridges, without any further addition. The Publishers are themselves inclined to believe that this also is by Walter Bridges, who took the same side with William Bridge in the controversy on the subject of resistance; but as there was no clue to determine the point, they have decided to include it herein. It would seem that Dr. Hammond published a tract, entitled, "The Loyal Convert," and which was in favour of the royal cause. W. Bridges has in his pamphlet reprinted the whole of Dr. Hammond's, with his own annotations thereupon. The annotations alone, therefore, constitute the writing of W. Bridges.

The last piece in the series, and which only reached the Publishers when just concluding the last volume, is a posthumous piece. The preface appended thereto sufficiently manifests the doubtful character of its authorship, and William Bridge, therefore, ought not to be held responsible for every sentiment it may contain. It is added as making the whole complete.

The two letters of William Bridge preserved in "Peck's Desiderata Curiosa," are inserted in the memoir.

The Publishers congratulate themselves in being able to supply an undoubtedly correct likeness of their venerable

author. It is engraved *fac-simile* from the original plate, the painting from which that was taken, being still preserved in the vestry of the Independent chapel at Great Yarmouth.

They cannot close this brief advertisement without expressing the satisfaction they have derived in thus bringing before the church the writings, now first collected, of one of her ablest ministers. It is their earnest desire that the Lord who so largely blessed his labours when living, may renew that blessing still more abundantly upon the valued legacy he hath left behind, and that thereby many may be established in our most holy faith.

18, PATERNOSTER ROW.
Feb. 6. 1845.

MEMOIR.

Materials for a lengthened Memoir of William Bridge do not exist, and it is scarcely worth while for the sake of diffuseness, to enlarge upon the circumstances of the times in which he lived: although he undoubtedly occupied a prominent place in the controversies which then agitated the church and the kingdom, and by his writings on the subject of resistance to the higher powers, probably influenced considerably the minds of men at that important period.

His memory is dear, not as the champion of a sentiment upon which there will always be difference of opinion, but as the able and successful preacher of the gospel of peace, as the luminous and wise unfolder of the doctrines of salvation, as the profound disputant with the enemy in the gate: here our author shone, here in his proper sphere he gained and maintained a popularity superior to most of his contemporaries, and in these discourses which he has left behind him, he still lives embalmed in the affections of the church of Christ, and still continues a profitable servant in the vineyard of his Lord.

Times of difficulty and of persecution, have always been seasons in which God's ministers shine with greatest lustre. As the stars are brightest in the darkest night, so when tribulation shrouds the hemisphere in gloom, the lights in God's spiritual Israel, which in seasons of quiet or prosperity are unknown and unobserved, become visible, and men strengthened then according to the day, come forth manifesting a devotedness and an ability of which they themselves were previously unconscious; and thus, as was the case with the children of the promise in the land of Egypt, the more they are oppressed the more they grow. God's people will not for this reason make persecution the subject either of their desires or their prayers: the cross which the Lord enables his people to sustain, is the cross which he himself

lays upon them: but this fact is a source of encouragement to the believer when foreboding coming calamity, and it should establish the certainty of the cheering truth, that if He who ruleth all things by the word of his power, should permit to come again into our privileged land the demon of persecution, he will raise up at the same time, such as shall be endued with the Spirit from on high, and by a larger measure of his gracious influences, animate and support the people of his love. Seldom has it been the case, that he who was great in the sunshine, continued great in the gloom. The rich and the dignified, and they of whom even the people of God hoped great things, often fall away at such a time, and walk no more with them; while most useful and much beloved, some of whom the world is not worthy, and of whom the world retains no memorial, live and walk in the light of God's manifested countenance, and feed the flock of God, at the peril of contumely, suffering and death.

Amongst those thus useful, thus beloved, and thus in their personal history almost unremembered, our author must be included. We have been unable to ascertain even the town which gave him birth. That he was a native of Cambridgeshire is we believe certain, and also that he was born in the year of our Lord, 1600. He was educated at Emanuel College, Cambridge, where he entered at the age of sixteen, and became Master of Arts at the age of twenty-six. He was for many years a Fellow of this College. It has been remarked, that this College is distinguished, for having educated more who became afterwards Nonconformists, than any seven other Colleges or Halls in either University. In the year 1631, he was appointed to the lectureship of Colchester, where he continued but a short time. In the year 1633, he had a Friday lecture at St. George's, Tombland, Norwich, for which he was paid by the corporation. In the year 1636, we find that he was rector of St. Peter's, Hungate, Norwich, a living which at that time was not worth more than twenty-two pounds per annum. Here it was that he was silenced by Bishop Wren, for not being a thorough Conformist. He continued however in the city some time after his suspension, until he was excommunicated, and the writ *de capiendo* came forth against him.

Driven thus from his native land, he took refuge in Holland, which has many times been the honoured place for sheltering the persecuted worthies of the church of Christ. He settled at Rotterdam, succeeding as pastor the celebrated Hugh Peters, and becoming thus associated with that eminent man of God, Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs. From a passage in the "Apologetical Narration," it may be inferred, that Mr. Bridge received much support from the magistrates of the city, and that many wealthy persons joined the church, some of whom had fled from the persecutions of Bishop Wren.

While at Rotterdam he renounced the ordination which he had received when he entered the church of England, and was again ordained after the Independent way, by Samuel Ward, B. D.; after which he similarly ordained Mr. Ward.

He returned to England in 1642, in the time of the Long Parliament, before whom he frequently preached. The thanks of both houses were constantly voted for his able discourses thus delivered, and on July 30, 1650, the sum of 100£ per annum was voted to him to be paid out of the Impropriations. It would seem from the two following letters, which have been preserved in "Peck's Desiderata Curiosa," that he was likewise consulted by the Parliament in reference to a general augmentation of ministers' salaries: we insert the letters, not as containing any intrinsic merit, but as shewing that he certainly possessed considerable influence in his day, or, to use the words of Dr. Nathaniel Johnston, in his book, entitled, "The King's Visitorial Power Asserted," and in which book there is a petition from the Fellows of Emanuel College, Cambridge, signed amongst others, by William Bridge; "He was a great preacher, and one of the demagogues of this Parliament."

To Henry Scobell, Esq. Clerk of the Council of State.

HONOURED SIR,

I HAVE received your letters, and am glad that you are so sensible of the concernment of our Lord Christ, in the ministry of his word.

The Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in Norfolk, are many; and in so short a time as one day, I am not able to inquire into their state and condition: but having lately

received a letter from Mr. Philip Nye, in reference to the Congregational, I have inquired after them the more diligently, and send you the names of all those churches in Norfolk, with the names of their pastors, and the towns where they are seated, and the worth of their living, so near as I can.

The Presbyterian churches I have less acquaintance with, and if you please to give me longer time to inquire, I shall serve you therein. Only, Sir, I can tell you now, that here are four ministers in this town, and no set maintenance for any, unless 100£, which I have from the state, given me by the Long Parliament. The other ministers are all good men and worthy, and no revenue but the people's charity.

Six miles from us there is a market town, and the only great town in the island, and the living is not worth 40£. per annum. If 50£ may be laid to it, and a good man put into the place, it would be very influential upon the whole island. The gift of the living belongs to the Lord Protector. The town hath been malignant, called Lowestoffe, known to his Highness, being part of the first fruits of his great labours. Much service might be done for Christ in settling this place, and if the Lord will give you hearts to pity this great town, many souls will bless God for your bowels. I will trouble you no further, but present this thing to your goodness, and yourself to the grace of God, who is able to supply all our wants, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. In whom I continue, Sir,

Your's, in all christian observance,

W. B.

Yarmouth, August 16. 1655.

A list of the Independent Teachers who are Pastors of Churches in the County of Norfolk :—

1. Church at Norwich: Pastor, Mr. Armitage; who hath an augmentation already.

2. Church at Yarmouth: Mr. Tookey, Teacher: Mr. Bridge, Pastor; who hath 100£ per annum from the state.

3. Church at North Walsom, a market town: Pastor, Mr. Brabiter; the living about 40£ per annum.

4. Church at Windham, a market town: Pastor, Mr. Mony; he hath an augmentation already.

5. Church at Hupton, a small town and a small living; no Pastor, Mr. Wale being gone to Ireland.

6. Church at Tunsted and Stowly: no Pastor, the revenue of both about 80£ per annum

7. Church at Alby and Thwait: Pastor, Mr. Nathaniel Brewster; the living about 50£ per annum.

8. Church at Lesetiorgham: Pastor, Mr. Cushin; the living about 100£ per annum.

9. Church at Fowlsome: Mr. Worts, Pastor; the worth of the living known to Major General Skippon.

10. Church at Edgefield: Pastor, Mr. Martin; the living competent.

To Henry Scobell, Esq. Clerk of his Highness's Privy Council.

WORTHY SIR,

I HAVE lately received a letter from Mr. Griffith, in the name of the brethren at London, whereby I am desired to certify you of the receipt thereof. This is then only to let you understand, that on August 26, I received his letters dated August 20, and I shall take care that copies of the letters be sent unto all the churches in our county. Continuing,

Your Servant in the gospel of Christ Jesus,

W. B.

Yarmouth, August 28. 1658.

He was one of the dissenting brethren in the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and was one of the writers of the "Apologetical narrative," which was published in 1643. His name is also subscribed to the "Reasons of the dissenting brethren against certain propositions concerning Presbyterial government," which was published in 1648.

After a brief sojourn at Norwich, where he preached a sermon to the volunteers, he at length fixed at Great Yarmouth, where he continued his labours till the Bartholomew Act. It is very probable, that at Yarmouth his congregation at least for some time met in the parish church for public worship, for in the year 1650, the north part of the church was enclosed for a meeting place, at an expense of £900; a considerable sum in those days.

When ejected by the black Bartholomew Act, he went to reside at Clapham, near London, and preached in, if not founded, the Independent meeting at that place; and at this place he died, March 12. 1670.

From an epitaph in Yarmouth Church, it would appear that he was twice married. The name of his first wife is not known; he afterwards married Margaret, the widow of John Arnold, merchant and once bailiff of that town. Whether he had any children, or how many, we have been unable to ascertain.

These few brief particulars are all we have been able to gather, respecting this eminently useful and deeply taught servant of the Most High God.

We close this brief memorial with an Elegy upon him, the unknown author of which was contemporary with him.

ELEGY

UPON THE DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM BRIDGE, A FAITHFUL AND PAINFUL LABOURER IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD.

Even as a lamp that spendeth liberally
Its oil, that we may do our work thereby;
Or as a sparkling star, which shineth bright,
Thereby directing travellers by night;
Or as the sun, that by his cheerful rays
Disperseth darkness, and his beams displays
On the cold earth, whereby he makes it spring
With fruitful crops, which joyfulness doth bring:
So Bridge dispersed his fruitful beams whilst here,
But now he 's fixed in a higher sphere.

You that have skill, sorrow and joy to blend,
Somewhat of both upon this prophet spend.
Grieve for your loss, and yet rejoice in this,
He 's gone from trouble to a place of bliss.
Mourn that you did no more improve his pains,
And yet rejoice that he now reaps the gains.
Weep that so bright a lamp no longer shined,
Yet joy in those choice works he left behind.
Mourn that such lights do set, and when ye 've done,
Joy that he 's there, where needs not moon nor sun,
Which never shall be stained with a night,
But hath eternal glory for its light:

And let those darkened intervals you see,
Increase your longing in that place to be;
For here are changes, prophets too must die:
Yet let me that expression mollify:
If the philosopher of old could say,
All of me shall not die; then sure we may
Transcendantly affirm of BRIDGE, that he
Yet lives, and shall live to eternity.
He lives in heaven, on earth he doth the same;
There in his soul, here in his works and name.
And though his body now be turned to dust,
Yet, at the resurrection of the just,
Each atom shall be gathered, so to raise
A glorious fabric to his Master's praise;
And soul and body jointly then shall sing,
Grave, where 's thy conquest? death, where is thy sting?
And then in triumph shall ascend on high,
Having obtained, through Christ, the victory.

PREFACES TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION.

TO THE READER.

So good is the God of Jacob to his Israel on this side the promised land, that no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Friend, if it may be verified of thee, what our blessed Saviour spake of Nathaniel, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile:" thou hast at present, not only a title to Esau's *enough*, but the tenure of Jacob's *all*: according to that ancient charter of all saints recorded by that great apostle of the gentiles: "For all things are yours; whether Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, &c. All are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's," 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23.

The very persons and ministry, calling and gifts, studies and writings, prayers and sermons of the faithful ministers of the gospel, all are for the use, service, and comfort of Christ's *little little flock*, το μικρον ποιμνιον. This evangelical truth is notably proved by the same apostle to the Ephesians. When our only High Priest ascended up on high, into the holy of holies there to transact his priestly office of intercession at the right hand of God the Father, "He gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," Eph. iv. 11, 12.

Thus this servant of the Lord is thine; as much thine, as Paul was the Corinthians. Yea, these his Spirit-full pieces of evangelical mysteries are thine: thine to build thee up in the saving knowledge of that doctrinal truth, the priestly office of Christ, as it is the magazine and storehouse of all that grace and comfort which we are crowned with under heaven: thine, to give thee a piercing insight into the intricate methods of the old serpent, and plainly to discover upon what rocks and sands the faith of many suffer shipwreck: thine, to arm thee with spiritual armour of proof, called a *breast-plate*, 1 Thess. v. 8. θωραξ, because it guards the heart; or, as the words elsewhere holds it out, *a long-large shield*, Ephes. vi. 16, θυρεος of θορα, which is very dexterous to defend the whole of a christian soldier from all the fiery darts of the *wicked one*, του πονηρου.

Reader, let us be thine, to beseech thee by the mercies of God, as thou tenderest the peace and welfare of all within thy own tabernacle, immediately to put in practice the holy contents of this experimental book. For if thou art one of the Lord's Simons, "Behold Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat." Oh, therefore make provision for thy soul with all speed, before the hour of temptation draweth on. It is not true valour, but desperate fool-madness, to adjourn this every-day's business of everlasting concernment: because in this, as in oversights of war, there is no room for a second retractation, the first error being unrecoverable.

This is all we have to advertise thee touching these choice useful lectures. For the author of them (whom we very much love and honour) we must bear witness, that when he first preached them from the bosom of Jesus Christ, his Master, to many tempted bleeding hearts in and about this populous city, he had not then the least thought to suffer them in print to serve the public. But afterwards, eyeing the voice of God in the multiplied desires and greedy expectations both of friends and strangers, his constant auditors, though of different judgments, in their private speeches and letters: and to prevent a further inconvenience, [sc. the publishing them by some who had imperfect notes in their hands M. W. M.] was necessitated to depute us [in his absence at Yarmouth] to hand out into the world this his copy, which was exactly penned from his tongue, by that his beloved amanuensis, and since kept charily by him as a precious thing committed to his trust. Την καλην παρακαταθηκην, 2 Tim. i. 14.

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant thee according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, so that thou mayest be more than conqueror through him that loved thee, and prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. So be it.

Thine in the Lord Jesus,

William Greenhill.
John Yates.
William Adderley.

TO THE READER.

That we may at least stay the longings of many thirsty souls with a sweet relish of a promising vintage of new wine this year, we have slipt off this second ripe cluster of grapes from its fellows, which if it be squeezed in the hand of faith, will prove itself to be so rich, fragrant, and sparkling with the blood, juice, and spirit of the gospel, that it needs not the purple of our epistle recommendatory to welcome it to any, that are in truth the living branches of the true Vine. Yet to the end we may happily invite some that are without to come in, that they also may both see and taste how good the Lord is to the children of the bride-chamber:

Reader, stand awhile at the well-head, with the poor woman of Samaria, admiring the infinite dimensions of those waters of life that are fountained up in Jesus Christ, "of whose fulness we all receive, even grace for grace."

The saints may be brimful of the Holy Spirit, as Stephen was, but it is according to measure, a vessel fulness; but Christ above or without measure, a spring fulness, which is not only repletive, but diffusive, unsearchable, unmeasurable.

The great ocean is too little to shadow out the overflowings of this fulness; for take away a drop or two from thence, it presently suffers a diminution: but though this Fountain of salvation should shed abroad his love upon all the world of the elect, as the waters cover the sea, yet it is ever full, running over. There is not the less light or heat in the Sun of Righteousness, though he daily ariseth with healing in his wings unto them that fear his name from east to west; "He is yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same." This is no hyperbole, but the language of Canaan. "Nec Christus nec cœlum patitur hyperbolum."—Luther.

Oh, that this unspeakable Fulness of heaven or earth, or saints and angels, that fills all in all, did now constrain thee to cast thy empty pitcher into these depths of his grace, so shouldest thou with this beloved evangelist, and the rest that are included in this WE ALL, "receive even grace for grace." To act faith is the principal use which directly flows out from every doctrine about Jesus Christ.

We shall appeal unto thee, whose eye is fixed on this full book of grace, Is not fulness in other things, a conquering, golden argument? Did not Joseph's treasure of corn, prevail with good old Jacob and his sons to go down into Egypt? And shall not this our gospel Joseph, who alone is the Bread of Life that once came down from heaven to feed hungry souls, engage thee, almost famished, to come unto him for this staff of life, that thou mayest live? Were they not the floods of milk and honey that did run down the promised land, that did set the Israelites' teeth on edge to be there? And shall not the overflowings of Christ's heart in heaven towards sinners on earth, make thee to hunger and thirst after His righteousness, who is the Lord our Righteousness? Was it not the abundance of Solomon's natural wisdom, which was as a constellation of stars in his crown, that invited the queen of Sheba to travel from the utmost parts of Arabia to kneel before his throne? And is there not a greater than Solomon here, "who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, full of grace and truth?" Oh where, where then are the spiritual actings of thy soul upon him? Abraham's faith was a very lively, vigorous, and a more than conquering faith; when the sentence of death was apparent on the head of the mercy, and the womb leading to it: and is thy faith like a tree twice dead, plucked up by the roots? God forbid. Oh, remember the fulness of the infiniteness of all perfections that are originally in the Lord, being able to fill up all the empty chinks, void places, the unsatisfied gaspings and yawnings of the vast spirit of man. We shall seal up all with the evangelical words of that voice of Christ echoed in a wilderness, as the great motive of all motives, "The kingdom of heaven," of grace, of Christ, and all his benefits, "is at hand," hath approached. Therefore, believe, repent: "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

Thine, in and for the Lord Jesus Christ, and his fulness, that thou mayest receive even grace for grace,

WILLIAM GREENHILL.
WILLIAM ADDERLEY.
JOHN YATES.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the Worshipful Maurice Thompson, Esq., George Thompson, Esq., William Thompson, Esq. Sheriff of London, Robert Thompson, Esq., Sir John Wittewrong, Knight, William Ofield, Esq., Samuel Champnes, Elias Roberts, and William Hawkins, Esqrs. with their Wives and Children, Grace and Peace.

Honoured and Beloved in our Lord Jesus,

It is not want of respect that I seem thus to crowd your names together, I owe more than an epistle to each of your names, but because God hath made you one, though branched into several habitations, I take the boldness to present this work to you, as unto one family. It is written of the stork, that she useth to leave one of her young ones to the house where she made her nest. "Ciconiæ mos est unum e pullis relinquere domui qua nidulata est."—Lud. Vives. And upon that account some of my labours do belong to your family, where I studied, and from whence I preached them: some of you and yours have often desired the publishing of these notes, and being printed, whither should the press send them but to your door? you are the family with whom I have had the honour to converse much whilst living; and now the blossoms of the grave are upon me, I dedicate these notes unto you, that by them I may live and speak with you when my head shall lie under the clods: you are a family whom the Lord hath blessed and raised not only to a great estate in the world, but to the saving knowledge of his Son, our dear Saviour, and whom should I serve and honour but those whom God honours and blesseth?

That family is not far from blessing, which hath godly children, children trained up and seasoned with the grace of Christ from the cradle; "The Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom," and wherein did that blessing consist? the scripture tells us. 1 Chron. xxvi. That some of his children were porters in the house of God, others were mighty men of valour, able men for strength and service, and the reason is given, verse 5. "For the Lord blessed him," so that children useful and serviceable both in church and state are a great blessing unto a family. The Hebrews say, that children are the father's building, בנה a בן "quia filius est ædificium patris;" and indeed he builds wisely that doth lay the foundations of his house in a godly seed. "Lo, children (saith the Psalmist) are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb are his reward, as arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are children of the youth, blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them;" especially where these arrows are well headed and well hearted too. And upon this account it is good for great families to have good servants. For, corrupt servants do debauch children, and debauched children do scatter brimstone upon the house of their fathers.

Neither is that family an unblessed family which is strict in the observation

of the sabbath or the Lord's day. God hath blessed that day that he might bless them who do keep that day; hereby England hath been blessed with the power of godliness more than other nations; "My sabbath, (saith God) shall be a sign between me and thee." And in the primitive times when a christian was asked whether he had kept the Lord's day, his answer generally was, I am a christian, I cannot neglect it. "Servasti diem Dominicam? Christianus sum intermittere non possum." As if the observation of the Lord's day were the badge of a christian; this is the girdle of all our duties, and in respect of this girdle I may say, ungirt, unblessed; the valleys of the week day are blessed by the upper springs of this day; and as the commandment doth especially point at, and look wishly upon the master of the family, saying, Neither thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, &c., so doth the blessing also.

Blessed is that family which doth industriously seek to build the house of God and the house of the poor; David did but intend to build God's house, and the Lord promised him to build his house. The Egyptian midwives spared the Israelites' children, whereby, the poor families and houses of the Israelites were built, and the Lord dealt well with the midwives and made them houses, Exod. i. 20.

Neither is that family far from blessing which is a friend to the ministry. Receiving, hiding, and refreshing the painful and faithful ministers and preachers of the gospel; "The Lord give mercy (saith Paul) to the house of Onesiphorus, for he hath refreshed me," not once and no more, but, "he hath oft refreshed me:" nor did he do this because I followed him and sought him out, but, "he sought me out very diligently, and found me." And in the day of my greatest affliction he was not ashamed of me, "for he was not ashamed of my chains," wherefore the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy in that day; and give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. i. 16, 17, 18. "He that receiveth a prophet (saith our Saviour) in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward," and what is the reward of a prophet, but to profit by the prophet, and to have a share in his venture, and in all that good which he doth by his ministry.

A praying family, also, is a precious family and blessed, especially where prayer and pains, religion and righteousness, frugality and liberality are in conjunction: some are much for pains-taking and little for prayer, others are much for prayer and little for pains-taking; some are much for religion and little for righteousness, others are much for righteous dealings and little for religion; some are much for frugality and little for liberality, others are much for liberality and little for frugality; but blessed is that family where prayer and pains, religion and righteousness, frugality and liberality meet and dwell together under one roof. "Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum frustra laborat quisquis eam ædificat, Psal. cxxvii. Non enim dicit, Dominus ædificat domum nemine scilicet laborante, sed ita, nisi Dominus ædificaverit frustra laborat perinde ac si diceret, labore quidem opus est, sed hujus conatum frustra sumi si solus erit, non enim laboris sedulitas sed Dei benedictio rem fœcundaret omnia perficit."—Luther farrago Epistol.

Now those things I have seen amongst you: only, as heretofore, so now labour to abound therein more and more, that you and your family may be as the field which the Lord blesseth. And as God hath raised you to an outward greatness in the world, so let your hearts be great for God, that what Pliny reported of Vespasian, may be truly said of you; "Nec quicquam in te mutaverit fortunæ amplitudo nisi ut prodesse tandundem posses et velles." Your abundance hath changed nothing in you, but this, that your power to do good is now made answerable to your will: counting it greater mercy to lay out for God, than to lay up for yourselves, for it may be when you come to die, you will have more com-

fort in what you have laid out for God, than in what you have laid up for your children. And why should we not give that to God by an act of our faith which he gave to us by an act of his love?

And as for your children, if I might not exceed the bounds of an epistle, I would say to them:

Children, O children, know your fathers, and the God of your fathers, know your parents, for that is the first commandment with promise, and you shall honour yourselves in honouring them. It is recorded of the Catanenses, (Camerar. oper. subcis. Centur. i. cap. 66.) that they made a stately monument of kingly magnificence, in remembrance of two sons, who took their aged parents upon their backs and carried them through the fire when their father's house was all in a flame. And of all the birds, the stork hath the name for the good bird, and why? but because the younger of them do help and bear up the elder, their weak parents; but though your parent is to be honoured, yet your God is more to be honoured. If you know God when you are young, God will know you when you are old; "remember therefore your Creator in the days of your youth:" and your Creator will remember you in the days of your age. "חסידה pia avis, iconiis eximia in est pietas: et enim quantum temporis impenderint fœtibus educandis, tantum et ipsæ a pullis suis invicem aluntur. Solinus, cap. 11. Schind. Parentes senectute confectos humeris suis gestare dicuntur."—Avenar.

Take heed of youthful sins, for the sweet sins of our youth do bite sore in our age.

Get an inward principle of grace in your own souls, for if you live on your parents' root, when your parents die, your goodness will die too; and therefore look well to the laying of your foundation, which is not to be laid in disputation but humiliation.

Be not unwilling to bear the yoke in the days of your youth, for he that can carry a calf when he is young, will carry an ox when he is old. Affliction gives you understanding; it is the school of experience. The oxen that are for use, are kept tied up, when those that are fatted for the shambles, are let loose into the pastures to feed at their pleasure. "Vituli triturantes quotidie ligantur vituli mactandi quotidie in pascuis libere relinquuntur."—Augustin.

Be not too confident of what you can do, or will do. Young men are apt to be too confident, as old men are apt to be too fearful; but the best swimmers are the soonest drowned, because of their confidence. "Wherefore in all thy ways acknowledge the Lord, and lean not to thine own understanding," Prov. iii.

When you come to the great turns of your life, be sure that you make a right choice, for every man is as his choice is. If there be any dirt on the hands, it will appear in the knuckles, the turning places; and if there be dirt in your lives, it will be found and appear in your great turns.

Let your dwelling-place be where God dwells, and he dwells where his ordinances are, for there he records his name. But though you live under ordinances in regard of your station, yet live above them in regard of your affection, passing through them unto Christ, and through Christ into the bosom of the Father. It was not David's sling that killed Goliah, but the name of God in the use of the sling.

Seek not great things for yourselves in this world, for if your garments be too long, they will make you stumble; and one staff helps a man in his journey, when many in his hands at once hinder him; but labour to do great things for God, and God will do great things for you. Terrene or earthly felicity, is the

lowest part of perfect felicity. "Infima pars fælicitatis perfectæ est terrena fælicitas."—Augustin.

Be much in private prayer, for the more you come to God, the more welcome you are; his customers have the best pennyworths; and if God do much for you in the morning duty, do much for him all the day after; and if you have little from God in the morning, walk humbly all the day after. "A prece principium."

Let your company be always such as you may get good from, or do good unto. When you are alone, think of good things; and when you are in company, speak of good things.

Keep the truth, and the truth will keep you.

And whatever mercy or blessing you receive, trace it to heaven gates, and to Christ's blood; for it flowed from Christ's blood, and leads you to heaven. "And the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you all (parents and children) perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever."

Your servant in the gospel of Christ,

William Bridge.

REV. WILLIAM BRIDGE'S WORKS.

Vol I.

After more delay than was expected, occasioned by the great difficulty experienced in collecting a complete set of the original Editions, the Publishers have the pleasure of presenting to their Subscribers their First Volume. The Whole Work will be comprised in Four Volumes. Volume the Second may be expected during January, and the other Two Volumes respectively, three and six months afterwards, With the Fourth Volume, will be given a complete set of Title-pages, Lists of Contents to each Volume, and a General Index to the Whole Work. Likewise, a Memoir of the Author, and a Portrait, accurately engraved from an Original, entrusted to the Publishers for that purpose; also, directions to the binder.

18, *Paternoster Row,*
November, 1843.

THE GREAT GOSPEL MYSTERY OF THE SAINTS' COMFORT AND HOLINESS,

OPENED AND APPLIED FROM

CHRIST'S PRIESTLY OFFICE,

IN

FOUR SERMONS,

PREACHED AT STEPNEY, A. D. 1647.

ON

CHRIST'S PRIESTLY OFFICE.

SERMON I.

" Wherefore in all things it behoved him, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and a faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation (or atonement) for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 17, 18.

THE apostle Paul, (whom I take to be the penman of this epistle) having in the former part of this chapter, shewed the reasons, why it behoved Christ for to suffer death: he comes now, in the latter end thereof, to give you an account, by laying down some reasons, " Why it behoved Christ, to be in all things made like unto us," whom the apostle here calls the brethren of Jesus Christ.

In other scriptures we find, that our Lord and Saviour Christ, is called our Father, " The Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." Here he is called our Brother, we his brethren. Now the same person, to be both a father, and a brother unto the same man, in nature it cannot be.

But because all these relations, are too scant, and narrow vessels to hold forth the love of Jesus Christ towards us: therefore inconsistent relations are given unto him. A father provides for his child, which the brother doth not. A brother can stoop, and condescend unto his brother, which the superiority of the father will not bear. So that here is held forth unto us, the stooping, condescending love of Jesus Christ: and therefore he is called our Brother, and we his brethren.

But why, and what reason is there, that the Lord Jesus Christ should in all things be made like unto us his brethren?

The apostle in these words gives the reason, " That he might be a merciful, and a faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," &c. The Lord God our Father, sware unto Jesus

Christ, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." He was to be the great High Priest. Among the Jews, in the times of the Old Testament, they had an high priest, that was in all things to stand between God and them, and in case any sinned, to make an atonement for them. As the Jews had their high priest: so the Lord Jesus Christ, he was to be, and he is, the Apostle and the High Priest of our christian profession, as Aaron was of the Jews' profession. And therefore says the apostle, "It behoved him, in all things to be made like unto us."

But could not Jesus Christ be merciful unto poor tempted souls, unless he were in all things made like to them: like in their natures, like in their affections, like in matter of temptations?

Christ as God, could have been merciful unto us, although he had not been made like unto us: but not as our High Priest.

There is an ability of sufficiency, and of power: and so Christ as God, was able to succour those that are tempted, although himself had never been tempted. But there is an ability of idoneity or fitness, or aptness and disposition: and so the apostle says here, "For in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

It is plain then, what that is, that is the great support of a christian against all temptations: wherein lies our succour against all temptation, namely, in the priestly office of Jesus Christ.

The priestly office of Christ, it is the great magazine and storehouse of all that grace and comfort which we have on this side heaven: it is that whereby we are reconciled to God the Father, and relieved against all temptation. This is the great thing that these words hold forth.

And therefore, upon this account, the apostle Paul, finding the Hebrews labouring under great temptations, doubtings, fears, and much unbelief; he does not only here, but all along in this book of the Hebrews, open the priestly office of Christ unto them.

And indeed, what comfort can we have in God himself, but through Christ? and what comfort can we have in Christ himself, but as he is clothed with his priestly garment, with

the office of High Priest? Whatsoever comfort we have in the other offices of Christ, namely his kingly and his prophetical offices, it is all originated and principiated in this: the priestly office of Jesus Christ, it does give a life, and being, and efficacy to both the other offices. And therefore the high priest, in the times of the Old Testament, (who was a type of Christ) he wore a crown upon his head, and the breastplate of Urim and Thummim upon his breast: showing that both the other offices, the kingly and the prophetical office, were planted upon the priestly office of Jesus Christ.

Yea, if you look into the ist, iind, and iiird chapters of the Revelation, you will find, that whatsoever streams of comfort did run down upon the churches through the other titles and attributes of God, they are all fountained here. In the iind chapter and the 1st verse, the Lord Christ hath this title, that he holdeth the seven stars in his right hand! "These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand." In the 8th verse, writing unto the church of Smyrna, he takes up another title or attribute: "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive." At the 12th verse, writing unto the church at Pergamus, he takes up another title: "These things saith he who hath the sharp sword with two edges." Now look into the ist chapter, and you shall see that those several titles, wherewith he clothes himself when he speaks unto the churches severally, are all summed up together at the 16th verse. "And he had in his right hand seven stars:" that is his title unto the church of Ephesus: "And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword;" that is his title unto the church of Pergamus. And at the 18th verse, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore;" that is another title that he useth when he speaketh unto the church of Smyrna. But in the 13th verse is opened the fountain of all these streams: "In the midst of the seven candlesticks, I saw one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle." This was then the robe and attire of the High Priest: whose garment came down unto his feet, and he was girt about with a golden girdle. So that all these other attributes and titles of Christ, they have their rise

here; here is the spring-head of all those consolations, even the priestly office of Jesus Christ.

Usually those excellencies and attributes of Christ are most beneficial unto the saints, that are most opposed by the world. What title, attribute, or excellency of Christ is there, that is more invaded by the world, than the priestly office of Jesus Christ? What is the whole body of anti-christianism, but an invasion upon this priestly office of Christ? What is the popish mass (that unbloody sacrifice) but a derogation from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ once upon the cross, and so a derogation from his priestly office? What are all those popish penances, and satisfactions enjoined, but a derogation unto the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, and so unto the priestly office of Christ? What is all their praying to saints and angels, but a derogation unto the intercession of Jesus Christ, and so unto the priestly office of Christ? What does the Pope call himself? he calls himself the high priest, the very title that our Lord and Saviour takes unto himself. So that the whole body of anti-christianism, is a great invasion upon the priestly office of Jesus Christ. Now that which is usually opposed most by the men of the world, that excellency and that attribute of Christ is of all other the most comfortable and beneficial unto God's people. The truth is, this priestly office of Jesus Christ is an office of mere love, and tender compassion; erected and set up on purpose for the relief of poor distressed sinners; and there is no mixture of terror with it: there is a mixture of terror with the other offices of Christ. The Lord Christ, he is King, and he hath a kingly office, and by his kingly office he rules over the churches, and rules over all the world: but all do not obtain mercy that he rules over. "As for those mine enemies, that will not submit, will not have me to reign over them, bring them, and slay them before me." The prophetical office of Jesus Christ, it extendeth unto many that shall never be saved: "Light shines in darkness, and darkness comprehendeth it not." "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But now, wherever the priestly office of Jesus Christ is let forth upon a soul, that soul shall certainly be saved for ever.

What was the great relief amongst the Jews against their sins? The Jews, you shall observe they had many reliefs:

when they were in the wilderness, and were stung with the fiery serpents, then they had a brazen serpent for to look upon, as a relief against that distress. When they wanted water, they had the water out of the rock, as a relief against that distress. When they wanted bread, they had manna from heaven, as a relief against that distress. But when they sinned, whither did they go? Then they took a sacrifice, and went unto the priest, and he was to offer for them. So that the priestly office then, was the only relief they had against sin.

And so now, the priestly office of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is that great succour and relief which christians have against all temptations under heaven.

You will say unto me, But general things affect not: let us see it in some particulars, wherein this priestly office of Christ is the great magazine and storehouse of all our grace and comfort?

For answer hereunto, I will begin this exercise with one particular of the priestly office of Christ, in showing what a relief and succour it is unto a christian against all temptations, and what a bottom of comfort, and special means of grace and holiness.

The text says that the work of the high priest is, "To make reconciliation for the sins of the people." In the times of the Old Testament, the high priest made an atonement for the people: in case any man had sinned, he brought a sacrifice, and his sins were laid upon the head of the sacrifice. Once every year the high priest did enter into the holy of holiest, and with the blood of the sacrifice did sprinkle the mercy-seat, and laid the sins of the people upon the head of the scape-goat, and so made an atonement for the people. All which will clearly appear in that xvith chapter of Leviticus, at the 14th verse: "He shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward: and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times." And at the 21st verse: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, and

so he shall make an atonement:" as in that chapter. This was the work of the high priest, in case any had sinned, to make an atonement and satisfaction (by way of type) for the sins of the people.

Now for the better proof of this great gospel truth that I have propounded, I shall insist on these five things.

First, That when the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross, he did offer up himself a sacrifice unto God the Father.

Secondly, That when this sacrifice was upon the altar, then the sins of all believers, past, present, and to come, were all laid upon Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, That when these sins were thus laid upon Christ, he did thereby give full satisfaction unto God the Father, unto divine justice.

Fourthly, That all this he did as our great High Priest, and in a more transcendent, and eminent manner, than ever any high priest did before him.

Fifthly, How all this doth conduce to our comfort, and to our holiness.

First, When our Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross, he did offer up himself a sacrifice unto God the Father. He did not (as the Socinians say) die only as an example for to teach us how to die; but he offered up himself a sacrifice unto God the Father then. Yea, as if all sacrifices were met in him; all those titles that are given unto other sacrifices, they are given unto him. There are three sorts of sacrifices: some were living; others were not living, and those were either solid, as bread and the like; or else they were liquid, as wine and oil. There was always, *destructio rei oblatiæ*, a destroying of the thing offered. If it were a living thing that was sacrificed, then it was said to be slain: in answer to that, Jesus Christ is said to be a Lamb slain from the beginning of the world. If it were a dead thing that was offered up, as bread, or corn, a solid thing, then the sacrifice or offering was said to be bruised: in answer to that, our Lord and Saviour Christ is said to be bruised for our iniquities. If it were a liquid thing that was offered up to God, as wine or oil, then it was said to be poured out: in answer to this, it is said of our Lord and Saviour, that his soul was poured out unto death. Thus all sacrifices meeting in him. "Behold the Lamb of God!" (says John the Bap-

tist) when he saw Christ. He does not say, Behold the bull of God, or the goat of God; and yet bulls and goats were sacrificed. Why does he rather say, Behold the Lamb of God, than the bullock or the goat? For when the high priest went into the holy of holiest, and sprinkled the mercy-seat, he did not sprinkle the mercy-seat with the blood of the lamb, but with the blood of a goat; and yet, notwithstanding, it is not said, Behold the goat of God, but, Behold the Lamb of God! Why so? Not only because that Christ was of a lamb-like and meek disposition (as some would have it): not only because that the great type of Christ was the paschal lamb (though these be reasons), but there was a daily sacrifice in the temple; whether men brought any offering or no, there was a standing sacrifice in the temple, morning and evening, and that sacrifice was a lamb. Now therefore, to shew that Jesus Christ is the daily sacrifice, therefore he cries out, and says, Behold the Lamb of God, and not the goat of God? for the goat was not sacrificed every day as the lamb was.

For proof of this take the apostle's exhortation, Eph. v. 2, "Walk in love, as Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." Here are three things considerable. First, He does not say, Who hath redeemed us; but to shew his great love unto us, "Who hath given himself for us:" he doth not say, Who hath given himself for our sins; yet he says so in Gal. i. 4, "Who gave himself for our sins?" but, "Who gave himself for us." Why? To shew who they were that he gave himself for: he gave himself for us, as sinners. Again, he says here, he gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice; not only an offering, but a sacrifice too. So that this first proposition is clearly proved, That our Lord Jesus, when he died upon the cross, he did offer up himself as a sacrifice unto God the Father.

Secondly, As he did offer up himself a sacrifice unto God the Father, so when he was upon this altar, this sacrifice; the sins of all believers were then laid upon Jesus Christ: those that do now believe, or shall hereafter believe, they were all then laid upon Jesus Christ. Look into the liiird of Isaiah, verse 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray, and have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath

laid on him the iniquities of us all." That which God lays on shall never be taken off, no man shall take it off: the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.

Yea, our iniquities are not only said to be laid on him, but (to use the same word that is used for the sacrifice) it is said, He bare our sins upon the cross; as the goat bare the sins of the people: so says the apostle, "He himself bare our sins upon the cross."

Moreover, he did not only bear our sins upon the cross, but, says the apostle, "He was made sin for us." It is not said, He was made a sinner, or accounted a sinner only for us, but "He was made sin for us." All our iniquities were laid on him; he bare our sins, and he was made sin for us upon the cross. Thus briefly the second proposition is cleared, That when he did thus offer up himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, the sins of all believers were then laid on him.

Thirdly, When the sins of believers were laid on him, then he did make full satisfaction unto God the Father, and divine justice for all our sins. This is a bottom of much comfort. For if the Lord Jesus Christ our Surety had not satisfied to the utmost farthing, our great Creditor, God the Father, for all our debts, God the Father might come upon us the debtors. But our Surety, the Lord Christ, hath given full satisfaction unto God the Father, that no more demands can be be made upon us. And indeed else, how could our Surety ever have come out of prison: he was under arrest, he was in the jail, in the grave: the Father, the great Creditor lets him out; and did not only let him out, but the Lord Jesus Christ, he goes into heaven, and sits down there at the right hand of the Father; surely, if the Creditor had not been satisfied, the Surety should never have been released out of prison.

He was so fully satisfied, that "he looked for iniquity, and he found none" (says the text). He looked over all his books, to see if he could find any thing upon the score, but he found none: all our debts were paid. "Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world." He does not say, That takes away the sin of the Jews only; but takes away the sin of the whole world. He does not say, That takes away the sins (in the plural number), but takes away

the *sin* (in the singular number): sins go so together, as if they were but one: but let the sin be never so twisted together, as if it were but one sin, this Lamb of God, he takes away the sin of the world. And he does not say, That hath pardoned the sin of the world: for then a poor soul might say, Aye, but though he hath pardoned my sin, yet my sin is not mortified. Neither does he say, Behold the Lamb of God, that mortifies or destroys the sin of the world: but he gives you a word that takes in both pardon and mortification too. Behold the Lamb of God that takes them away: both in regard of pardon, and in regard of mortification: "Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world."

There is nothing that does so satisfy God the Father, as obedience, and the more full the obedience is, the more God the Father is satisfied thereby: now it is said of our Lord and Saviour Christ, that in this great sacrifice upon the cross, he was obedient. "He was obedient even to the death of the cross." That he that did make the law, should come down from heaven, and be subject to the law, what obedience was here! "Obedient to the death." Yea, unto the *deaths* (in the plural number). And he made his grave with the sinners: and his deaths was with the rich. "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich had his deaths," Isa. liii. 9. It is in the plural number in the Hebrew, though in our English translation it is in the singular. As if the Holy Ghost had called death, the second death that our Lord Christ had in some measure suffered. For, if you consider things truly and rightly, I believe you will find that our Lord and Saviour Christ when he died, and was in his agony, he did not only endure the first, but the torments of the second death. He overcame no more than he submitted to: he overcame death by submitting to death. Now he overcame the second death also, and therefore in some measure submitted to the torments of it, so far as he was capable. Look what the first Adam should have endured for his sin in the fall, that the second Adam now did endure in some measure for to take it off: "The day that thou eatest thou shalt die the death." It was not barely the corporal and outward death, but it was the second death. If our Lord and Saviour Christ did not endure the torments of the second death, the wrath of God upon his soul; why did he sweat drops of blood, and trem-

ble, and shake so, when he came to die? There is many saints and martyrs, when they come to die, they go skipping, and leaping, and rejoicing: and our Lord and Saviour, when he came to die, he sweats drops of blood; surely there was more than an outward death: Oh! the wrath of God, and the torments of the second death were upon his soul. Thus obedient he was, and this obedience of his, it was voluntary, for he needed not to have died; but he saw that God the Father was dishonoured by man's sin, and that poor man would be lost, and rather than that should be, he does voluntarily offer himself unto this obedience. "Lo I come, (says he,) in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, and thy law is within my heart," Psalm xl. 7, 8. Mark what an expression there is in that Psalm, it is spoken concerning Christ, as is plainly interpreted by the apostle in the xth of the Hebrews, at the 6th verse: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened" (or bored). The apostle when he translates these words, he translates them thus: "My body hast thou prepared." But read them as they are here in the Psalm: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ear hast thou bored." That as when a servant was willing to stay with his master, and to do him yet more service, the servant's ear was to be bored: so says the Lord Christ, I am as willing to do this work, to be thus obedient, as a servant whose ear is bored is willing to stay with his master: "And mine ear hast thou bored," says he; ah, here is obedience, here is obedience: this now did infinitely satisfy God the Father; in so much, that ye may see what is said, in that same vth of the Ephesians, and the 2nd verse. "Who hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." The whole world was full of a stench before, and the Lord was displeased with man before: but now when Christ comes, and offers up his sacrifice, he did thereby give full satisfaction unto God the Father, for it was a sweet smelling savour unto God the Father. So that thus the Father he was fully satisfied.

To this I shall add one word: When the Lord Jesus Christ offered up himself a sacrifice unto God the Father, and had our sins laid upon him, he did give more perfect satisfaction unto divine justice for our sins, than if you, and I, and all

of us had been damned in hell unto all eternity. For a creditor is more satisfied, if his debt be paid him all down at once, than if it be paid by the week: a poor man that cannot pay all down, will pay a groat a week, or sixpence a week; but it is more satisfaction to the creditor to have all paid at once. Should we have been all damned, we should have been but paying the debt a little, and a little, and a little: but when Christ paid it, he paid it all down to God the Father. Had we gone to hell, and been damned for ever, we had always been satisfying of God, aye but God had never been satisfied: but now when Christ makes satisfaction, God was satisfied. The creditor, if he be a merciful and a good man, is more truly satisfied where the debtor is spared; he does not desire that the debtor should be cast into prison, and there lie and rot; but he is better satisfied with the sparing of the debtor; let me have but my money, and so the debtor be spared I am willing, nay I desire it, says the good creditor. Now if all we had been cast into everlasting burnings, indeed the debt should have been a paying, but there the debtor had been lost: but now when Christ comes, and makes satisfaction unto divine justice, Ah! poor man is redeemed; here is the debtor spared. And therefore, the Lord he is infinitely more satisfied, by the satisfaction that Christ made upon the cross for our sins, than if all we had gone to hell; and been damned to all eternity. Oh! what a glorious and blessed satisfaction did this our High Priest make unto God the Father!

But you will say then, If the Lord Christ made this full satisfaction unto God the Father, how is it that believers, many of them have their sins and debts standing upon the score still, in their consciences so perplexed in regard of sin, as if there were no satisfaction at all made?

Luther calls this aspect of sin, a sacrilegious aspect and beholding of sin. As now (says he) if a man take out of an holy place some goods, and bring them into his own house; this is sacrilege. So for me to go and take my sins from Christ, and lay them in mine own bosom, this is sacrilege, says Luther.

But the reason of it is this, because that men do not study this truth, but are ignorant of it. As, suppose that a man do owe three or four hundred pounds to a shopkeeper for

wares and commodities that he hath taken up there: a friend comes and pays the debt, crosses the book: but the debtor, when he comes and looks upon the book, he is able to read all the particulars; item for such a thing, and item for such a thing, and item for such a thing; but the man being not acquainted with the nature of crossing the book, he is able to read all the particulars, and he charges it still upon himself, because he does not understand the nature of this crossing the book, and he is as much troubled how he shall pay the debt, as if it were not paid at all. So now it is here the Lord Jesus Christ, he hath come and crossed our book with his own blood: the sins are to be read in your own consciences, but we being not acquainted with the nature of Christ's satisfaction, and the crossing of the book, we charge ourselves, as if no sin at all were satisfied for us: yet when the Lord Jesus Christ was made an offering for sin upon the cross, then he did give full satisfaction unto God the Father. And that is the third.

Fourthly, This now he hath done as our great High Priest, and in a more transcendent and eminent way, than ever any high priest did before. For, though the high priest did come and make an atonement for a poor sinner, yet he himself was never made a sacrifice; the priest offered up a sacrifice, but himself never was made a sacrifice. But our great High Priest does not only offer up a sacrifice, but himself is made a sacrifice. Yea, that sacrifice that was then in the times of the Old Testament, it could not purge the conscience; not only because, as the apostle speaks, it was the blood of bulls and goats, but because the sacrifice was performed successively: as thus, a man sinned, then he brought a sacrifice; sins again, and then he brings another sacrifice: and once every year, the high priest goes into the holy of holiest to make an atonement. But in the meanwhile a poor soul might think thus, What if I die before the year come about, what will become of me? the high priest, he goes once a year into the holy of holiest, and sprinkles the mercy-seat, but what will become of me if I die before that time? But now, our great High Priest, he does not only offer up a sacrifice, and himself the sacrifice; but he offers up a sacrifice *once* for all: so says the apostle. So that now, when a christian hath sinned, he is not to think of a sacrifice that is

yet to come, a year hence, but he is to look unto that which is done already, a sacrifice once offered, and once for all: so that he needs not be in suspense now, as the Jews were; his conscience it may be fully purged from sin.

Again, take the high priest in the times of the Old Testament, and though he did make an atonement for the sins of the people, yet sometimes also he did make the people to sin. It is said of Aaron the great high priest, concerning the golden calf, that he did make the people naked: but the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, he makes an atonement for sin, and never does make them sin: he is so far from making the people naked, that he covers them with his righteousness that their nakedness may not appear. Here is a glorious High Priest.

Yea, this High Priest of ours, he does not only make an atonement for sin committed, and pays the debt; but he does also become our Surety unto God the Father: he does not only pay the debt that is past, but he becomes a Surety for time to come. None of all those High Priests that ever did so; not Aaron, not any high priest that ever gave his bond unto God the Father, that any sinner should never sin no more. But our Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, he becomes our Surety: and what Surety? not an ordinary Surety; for amongst us the Surety joins and does become bound with the debtor, but still it runs in the name of the debtor, and the debtor he gives the bond for to pay the debt. But now here, our Surety, he gives the bond, and we that are the debtors, we do not give the bond for to pay the debt: there is no godly man or believer that ever gave a bond unto God the Father that he will pay the debt: but our Surety comes, and the bond goes in the name of the Surety, and the debtor's name is out. Oh! what a glorious and blessed High Priest is here? here is a High Priest, beyond all the high priests that ever did go before! And that is the fourth thing.

Fifthly, How does all this conduce to our comfort or holiness?

I. How does all this make to our comfort?

1. Is it not a comfortable thing in the ears of a poor sinner, that there is a magazine and a storehouse of mercy set up? that the Lord hath erected an office of love, and of

mere compassion for poor sinners? Is it not a comfortable thing that God the Father is satisfied, and so your sins pardoned? "Son," says Christ unto the palsied man, "be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee," Mark ii. 5. He does not say, Be of good comfort, thy disease is healed: no, whether thy disease be healed, or whether it be not healed, this is comfort, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee."

If the Lord Jesus Christ hath satisfied for my sins, may a believer say, then whatsoever affliction I do meet withal, it does not come upon me as a punishment (properly), it does not come upon me as an arrest for to pay my debt. When a reprobate is smitten and afflicted, all his miseries, they are arrests for to pay his debt. Hath the Lord Jesus Christ satisfied divine justice, and God the Father for me? then surely these afflictions they do not come for me to make satisfaction.

Again, if the Lord Jesus Christ hath satisfied for my sins, may a believer say, then I shall never be damned, I shall never fall from grace. I have had many fears that I should fall from grace, and so go to hell, and perish at last: but if the Lord Jesus Christ hath satisfied divine justice for my sin, then God the Father will never punish my sin again, for it was punished in Jesus Christ, therefore I cannot fall from grace, therefore I can never be damned.

And if the Lord Jesus Christ hath satisfied divine justice as our great High Priest, then I may come with boldness unto the throne of grace. A debtor, so long as his debt is unpaid, he dares not come by the prison door, by the compter door; he is afraid of every sergeant, he is afraid of his friends that they should be sergeants: but when his debt is paid, then he dares go up and down with boldness. And so the poor soul, when he knows that his debt is paid, and Christ hath satisfied, then he may go with boldness unto the throne of grace.

But you will say, I cannot have the comfort of this, because I cannot say that Christ hath satisfied for me: How shall I know that Jesus Christ is my High Priest, so as to have satisfied for me? Ah, if I did but know that the Lord Jesus Christ were my High Priest in this particular, so as to have satisfied for me, then should I have comfort indeed: how shall I discover that? I am afraid he hath not satisfied for me!

And why not for thee? (man or woman) why not for thee? I shall tell you what I have heard concerning a young man, that lay upon his death bed, and went to heaven: while he was lying upon his death bed, he comforted himself in this: That the Lord Christ died for sinners. Oh! blessed be the Lord (says he) Jesus Christ hath died for me. Satan came in with this temptation to him: Aye but, young man, why for thee? Christ died for sinners, but why for thee? how canst thou make that appear, that Christ died for thee? Nay Satan (says he) and why not for me? Ah! the Lord Jesus, he died for sinners, and therefore, Satan, why not for me? So he held his comfort, and went up to heaven triumphing.

So say I to thee, poor drooping soul, that labours under temptation; why not for thee? why not for thee? and say so unto Satan, Why not for me?

Again, Christ's satisfaction it lies open for all sorts of sinners to come unto it. As the promise, it runs indefinitely; and if a man come to the promise, and apply it; his very applying the promise does make it his. You say, Oh! that I did but know that the promise belongs to me: I say, thy very resting upon the promise makes it to belong to thee. So, the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, this piece of Christ's priestly office, it lies open for all sorts of sinners for to come unto it: and your very resting upon it, and applying it to your own souls, it makes it to belong unto you.

Furthermore, if Jesus Christ be willing that you should think that he hath satisfied for you, then it is no presumption for you to think so. Now says he at the Lord's Supper, Take my blood that is shed for thee, I apply it to thee. Behold thy King cometh unto thee. When he rode upon an ass's colt, it was not said, Behold thy Lord cometh, but Behold thy King cometh to thee: he would have every one so to think.

More especially, if that a poor christian now, might not go unto Jesus Christ as unto his High Priest, and say, that he is an High Priest to me; then are we Christians, in a great deal worser condition than the Jews were; for when a Jew had sinned he might carry his sacrifice to the priest, and he might say, That this priest here belongs to me. And there was never a Jew, amongst all the people of the Jews, but

when the high priest sprinkled the mercy-seat, but he might say, This he hath done for me. Now, we are not in a worse condition than the Jews were: this High Priest is beyond all the high priests that ever was before him: and therefore there is never a poor christian but he may go to the Lord Christ and say, Oh! my High Priest, and, This my High Priest hath satisfied for me. Oh, what comfort is here to poor drooping souls! Lift up your heads, Oh all ye saints and children of God; methinks here is that indeed, that might bring you off your own sands. When there is no water in the river but his own, the tide comes not in, no sea water, only the water of the river, the native water, (as I may so speak) then your bottoms, your ships they stand upon the sands; but when the tide comes in, then they are raised, and come off the sands then. And so long as thou hast nothing in thy own channel, but thine own righteousness, thou stickest upon the sands in the deep mire; but now, when the tide of the Lord's satisfaction comes in, there is a full sea of mercy, and satisfaction (able to swim the heaviest vessel) made by Jesus Christ. Ah, methinks this should lift up a poor soul and fetch him off from his sands: Be of good comfort then. Thus it is evident how this truth does much conduce to our comfort.

But you will say, Does it not much conduce to our grace or holiness too? Or if it do, I pray how?

Yes, this truth does conduce much to our holiness too. You shall observe, that the new covenant of grace, it is laid and founded upon the satisfaction of Jesus Christ upon the cross, upon that oblation. Three times the apostle Paul makes mention of the new covenant of grace in the book of the Hebrews, the viiith, ixth, and xth chapters: and in all these places he lays the covenant of grace, and founds it upon this satisfaction of Jesus Christ. But especially in the ixth chapter, 13th, 14th, and 15th verses. The 14th: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." Then at the 15th verse, "And for this cause, he is the Mediator of the New Testament." For this cause: plainly laying the new covenant of grace upon the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, upon this part of his priestly office. So

then, thou mayest now go unto God the Father and say, Lord, thou hast made a covenant of grace with poor man, and this covenant of grace is founded upon the priestly office and satisfaction of Jesus Christ; and the Lord Jesus Christ he hath satisfied for me; and the new covenant promises, that we "shall be all taught of God." Lord, I am ignorant, Oh! therefore now, by the satisfaction of Christ let me be taught of thee, that I may be made wise unto salvation. And so again, Lord, thou hast made a covenant of grace with poor man; this is laid upon the satisfaction of Jesus Christ: the covenant of grace says, "I will write my law in your inward parts:" now, O Lord, seeing Jesus Christ hath founded this covenant in his blood, and I am one of those that he hath made satisfaction for; Oh! write thy law in my inward parts that I may do all thy wills.

But again (in the second place) that we may see how this doth conduce to our holiness: strengthen faith, and we strengthen all: if faith be weakened, all grace is weakened: strengthen your faith, and you strengthen all your holiness, and all your graces. The way to strengthen a bough, or a branch of the tree, is not to carry dung up into the tree, but to lay it to the root: strengthen the root, and ye strengthen all the branches. Faith is the root-grace: now the knowledge, and the thorough digesting of this truth, that the Lord Jesus Christ is our great High-Priest, in this point of satisfaction, it does wonderfully strengthen our faith. For, the more I know that God is willing, and Christ willing to shew mercy unto me, the more my faith is strengthened: I know this, that every man is willing to do the work of his office, if he be faithful: a porter is willing to carry a burden: why? because it is his office to do it. It is the office of Jesus Christ for to bear our sins: it is his office to be the great High Priest, that does satisfy God the Father for our sins: surely therefore, he is willing to do it, for he is faithful in his office.

But besides, the more I see an holy necessity upon Christ Jesus, for to show mercy to me, the more my faith rises. It is very remarkable the Lord Jesus Christ, as God, he may refuse, and might refuse, whether he would shew mercy to us or no: but now as a High Priest, he cannot refuse a poor sinner that does come unto him. If I know that Christ

is able to satisfy, is able to shew mercy to me, my faith stirs a little, at the sight of Christ's ability; if I know that Christ be willing to shew mercy to me, my faith rises higher: but if I know that Christ cannot refuse me, if I do come unto him, then my faith rises up to a great height indeed. When a poor sinner amongst the Jews, had sinned, and brought his sacrifice to the high priest, the priest might not refuse it: our Lord Jesus Christ is our great High Priest; I say, as God he may refuse, but now, he being our great High Priest, therefore when a poor sinner comes to Jesus Christ, as a High Priest he cannot refuse: oh what a great strengthening is this to faith! Strengthen faith, and you strengthen all: the right understanding of this truth, doth wonderfully strengthen faith.

Further, the more a man is engaged to Jesus Christ, and takes himself to be engaged to him, the more holy he is: the more a man sees himself freed from sin by Christ, the more he takes himself to he engaged to Christ, for freeing of him from his sin. Now this truth tells us how Christ hath satisfied for our sins, freed us from sin; and so we shall be the more engaged to Christ. If a man were going to prison, even at the compter door, for a great sum of money; and the door were unlocking: if a man should come and speak to the sergeant, Hold your hands, here is money for you, I will pay this man's debt, and lays the money down; would not this poor debtor take himself for ever engaged to that man, that should thus come, and lay down the money, and free him so seasonably from the compter, and prison? Thus it was with the Lord Christ; Ah, we were all going to prison, everlasting prison, chains of darkness, and he comes and lays down the money, makes full satisfaction to God the Father as our great High Priest: Oh! what an engagement is this to every soul unto the Lord Christ, to become the Lord Christ's for ever.

Lastly, the more a man does deny his own righteousness, the more holy he is with gospel holiness. It is said of the Jews, That they going about to establish their own righteousness, submitted not unto the righteousness of Christ. So on the contrary; when a man does go about to establish the righteousness of Christ, then he submits unto it, and then he denies his own righteousness. The more we see a

fulness of satisfaction made by Jesus Christ, for all our sins, unto God the Father, the more we acknowledge Christ's righteousness, and the more we establish it, and the more we shall be brought off from all our own righteousness.

Oh! therefore now, as ever you do desire, to have more grace, more holiness, more comfort; study, and study much this priestly office of Jesus Christ. There are many that complain, that they cannot profit under the means of grace: that they have hard hearts: that the ways, and ordinances of God are not sweet to them: prayer they do perform, but with no sweetness, they do not relish the blood and Spirit of Christ upon their spirits in their duties, &c. Many complain that their sins, and temptations (like the sons of Zeruiah) are to mighty for them, and that one day they shall be slain by the hand of Saul, such a lust, such a corruption. No wonder that we have these complaints, when we do not go unto the storehouse of comfort and grace that the Lord hath set open for us. The priestly office of Christ, it is the great magazine, and storehouse, of all that grace and comfort which we have on this side heaven: if ye do not go unto it, is it any wonder that ye want comfort, or that ye want grace? I appeal to you now; are there not some, nay, many that never went to Jesus Christ as their High Priest to this day? Ah, are there not some even professors, that do not know what the priestly office of Jesus Christ means? Oh! no wonder (poor soul) so uncomfortable, no more strength against thy temptations. If the State should appoint a man for to relieve poor, maimed soldiers, that go a begging: if they meet with the same man that is appointed by the State, and they beg of him in the streets as an ordinary man, he relieves them not: but now, if they come unto him, as a man appointed by the State for relief of such, then he relieves them according to the duty of his place. So it is with men, they go to Christ in an ordinary way, they do not go to Christ as the great Lord Treasurer of all our graces, as our great High Priest, they do not go unto him as in office; set up in office by God the Father for such relief: they do not address themselves to him as their High Priest to make satisfaction for them, and therefore they go away and have no relief. But would we have more strength against corruption? would we walk more comfortably in our course? would we find the ways of

God, ordinances, and duties more sweet and comfortable to our souls? then read, and consider that place in the Canticles ii. 3, "As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons: I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste." The spouse speaks it concerning Christ. What is this fruit of Christ? Your justification, adoption, vocation, sanctification, consolation, it is all the fruit of Christ: all your own duties, your prayers, reading, meditation, they are all the fruit of Christ: the enjoyment of all his ordinances, and all your spiritual privileges under the gospel, they are the fruit of Christ. Now says she, "I sat down under the shadow, and his fruit it was sweet unto my taste." As it is unto a man that does love fruit; be it pears, apples, cherries, or the like: I love this fruit (says he) but yet notwithstanding, I must needs go where this fruit grows, and gather it off the tree; and when he hath gone to the tree, and taken the fruit off the tree, (says he) I sat down under the tree. I had not the fruit, the apples, or cherries, brought unto my house, but I went unto the tree, and gathered it off the tree, and I sat down under the shadow of the tree, and Oh! how sweet was the fruit unto me! So says the soul, so says the spouse of Jesus Christ: I sat down under the shadow of Jesus Christ, and then his fruit was sweet unto my taste. It may be we have had other shadows: we have sat down under the shadow of our estate, our outward estate hath been sweet unto our taste. We have sat down, it may be under the shadow of friendship, and the fruit of friendship hath been sweet unto our taste; but behold here a tree, the tree of life, whose shadow reaches to the end of the earth: Ah, come, come and sit down under the shadow of Jesus Christ. If there be ever a poor soul, that never yet knew what comfort meant; Ah, come, come under the shadow of the Lord Jesus; the priestly office of Jesus Christ, it hath a very sweet shadow; come therefore, you that say you cannot profit under the means, and you that complain of such and such temptations, and such and such sins; and that you were never yet comforted, your consciences never pacified: come now, and sit down under the shadow of the Lord Jesus Christ. I tell thee, from the Lord, this fruit of his, it shall be sweet unto thy taste: thou shalt go to prayer, and prayer shall be sweet

unto thy soul, though heretofore thou couldst find no sweetness in it; so the word and other ordinances shall be sweeter unto thee than the honey or the honeycomb.

Thus it is evident how comfortable the priestly office of Jesus Christ is, and how much conducing unto our comfort, and holiness: Oh! therefore let us study, now study the priestly office of Jesus Christ, and come and sit down under his shadow, and the Lord make his fruit sweet unto all our souls. And thus I have opened, and applied the first particular of Christ's priestly office. The second follows, &c.

SERMON II.

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to godliness, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 17, 18.

I HAVE begun to discover from these words, that the priestly office of Jesus Christ, is the great magazine, and storehouse of all that grace and comfort which we have in this world: that whereby we are succoured, and relieved against all temptations. This hath been made good in the general; and in one particular work of the high priest.

If we now inquire further, what the work of the high priest was, and is, that accordingly we may address ourselves unto Jesus Christ for succour. We shall find, that it is also, to pray, and intercede for the people. "To make reconciliation for the sins of the people," says the text, "To make atonement for the sins of the people," says the Old Testament. Which reconciliation, or atonement, was made in the times of the Old Testament, not only by offering of a sacrifice, but by taking the blood thereof, and presenting that with prayers, and intercessions, unto God, to accept of it for the sins of the people. As we shall find in that same xvith of Leviticus: after the sacrifice was killed, the priest was to take the blood of it, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat; as we read in the 14th verse. And at the 12th and 13th, "He shall take a censer full of burning coals of

fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail; and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat." He was to cause a cloud of incense to arise upon the mercy-seat. All which was a great type of the prayers, and intercessions of Jesus Christ: who having once offered up himself a sacrifice for our sins, hath carried the blood, and the virtue of it into heaven, there sprinkled the mercy-seat, and there still by his intercessions does appear for us; as it is proved at large, in the ixth chapter of this epistle to the Hebrews, 11th and 12th verses, "But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building: neither by the blood of goats and calves: but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." And at the 24th verse: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." And if you duly consider this book of the Hebrews, you will find, that this work of Christ's intercession, is the essential work of his priestly office: it seems rather to go beyond the former, than to fall short of it. Hebrews, the viiith chapter, and the 4th verse, "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest." That is, look as it was in the times of the Old Testament: if the priest had only offered a sacrifice, and had not gone into the holy of holiest with the blood thereof, sprinkling the mercy-seat, praying, and interceding that it might be accepted for the sins of the people, the priest had not done the work of the priest, and so he had not been a complete priest: so now, (says the apostle) if Jesus Christ had only offered up himself here a sacrifice, and had not gone into heaven, the holy of holiest, and carried the power and the virtue of his death thither, to pray and intercede for us, he had not done the work of the great high priest. Every priest might sacrifice, but every priest might not go into the holy of holiest, that belonged only to the high priest to do. Now therefore, Jesus Christ going into heaven, the holy of holiest, there to make intercession for us, is the great, and the special work of this High Priest.

That I may clear up this mysterious truth, I shall deliver myself these four ways; by opening,

First, Wherein the intercession of Christ consisteth: and what he doth when we say he intercedes in heaven for us.

Secondly, How powerful, and prevailing his intercessions are with God the Father.

Thirdly, That he doth now intercede as our great High Priest and in a more transcendent and eminent way and manner, than ever any high priest did before.

Fourthly, This does conduce to our comfort, and to our holiness.

First, if it be demanded, Wherein consisteth this intercession of Jesus Christ.

I answer. First it consists in this: His appearing for us in heaven, his owning of our cause, and of our souls to God the Father: it is the word that is used in that ixth chapter of the Hebrews, the 24th verse, "Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He does not in an ordinary way and manner appear for us in heaven; but with an emphasis, he does openly, and publicly, before all the saints and angels, appear for us in the presence of God the Father. It is a comfort unto a man, sometimes to have a good friend at court, at the king's elbow, that may own him, and appear for him: but though a man have a friend at court, sometimes if there be any danger, he will not appear and own a man; it may be he will own him, and countenance his cause as long as there is no danger, but no longer. But now, here, we have a friend in heaven, that will appear for us, and own our causes, and our souls, and in all conditions appear for us. That is the first.

Secondly, He doth not only appear for us; but by virtue of his priestly office, he does carry the power, merit, and virtue of his blood into the presence of God the Father in heaven, and sprinkles the mercy-seat with it seven times. Seven is a note of perfection. Those that Christ suffered for, he does intercede for. He takes all their bonds, and he carries them in unto God the Father, and he says, Father, I have paid these bonds, I have paid this debt, I have satisfied thy justice for these poor sinners, and now my desire is, that they may be acquitted from these bonds, and from these debts.

This also is remarkable in that ixth chapter of the Hebrews, 11th and 12th verses.

Thirdly, He doth not only carry the power, and virtue of his blood, and present it to God the Father for our discharge: but he does also plead our cause in heaven, answering unto all those accusations that are brought against us. And therefore we may read what the apostle says in the viiith of Romans 33rd verse. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God: who also maketh intercession for us." Upon this ground the apostle speaks thus; Who shall condemn them? Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God the Father, to take off all accusations that shall be brought against them. Let the world condemn, let Moses condemn, let Satan condemn; Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God the Father, to take off all accusations that shall be raised against them. Concerning this there is a clear and full instance in that notable scripture the iiird chapter of Zechariah, and the 1st verse, we find Satan standing at the right hand of Joshua to resist him. "He shewed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." It was the custom of the accuser, to stand at the right hand of the accused: Psalm cixth verse 6th, "Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand:" take the wall of him in his accusation, condemning of him. Now here Satan standing at Joshua's right hand, notes his accusing of him. Well what was the matter that he accused him of? Ye shall find that there was matter, verse the 3rd. "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." Satan came and accused him that he had filthy garments: and so he had: for the priests had defiled themselves in Babylon, in marrying of strange wives, as Joshua and his children are charged, in the xth chapter of Ezra, and the 18th verse. Give me leave a little to open this charge of Satan, that we may see Satan had matter of charge, and accusation against Joshua. "And among the sons of the priests, that were found that had taken strange wives: namely the sons of Joshua." He was high priest. So that now, Joshua had defiled his garments:

there was then matter of accusation for Satan to work upon. But now, our Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest steps in, and takes off this accusation: the Lord said (at the iiird of Zechariah, 3rd verse) unto Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee." The word used by the Septuagint, is the same that is used for excommunication. And it is here twice repeated, "The Lord rebuke thee, even the Lord rebuke thee:" not only to show the fulness of Satan's rebuke: but to show the fulness of the intercession of Jesus Christ. Now would we see the fulness of Christ's apology for Joshua? says the Lord unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, even the Lord rebuke thee: and (says he at the latter end of the 2nd verse) "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Thus it is true Lord, that Joshua hath filthy garments: but yet not withstanding, Joshua is but as a brand plucked newly out of the burning. Take a brand, and pull it newly out of the fire, and there will be dust, ashes, and dirt about it. Lord (says he) Joshua is but newly pulled out of the burning, and therefore, Lord, he must needs have some ashes, and some dirt, and some filth about him: O Lord, (says Christ) although that Joshua be clothed with filthy garments, I will take away those filthy garments: verse the 4th, "He answered and spake unto those that stood before him saying, Take away the filthy garments from him: and unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." This can be none but Christ. Thus Christ takes off the accusation that was brought against Joshua by Satan, for his filthy garments. And so does the Lord Christ now; if a poor soul fall into any sin, defile his garments, Satan, he comes in, and takes the right hand of him, stands at the right hand and accuses, by reason of this filthy garment: but our Lord Jesus Christ our great High Priest, he being at the right hand of the Father, takes up the cause, and answers to the accusation: True Lord, this poor soul, indeed hath filthy garments; but he is but as a fire-brand plucked newly out of the burning: he was in his natural, and sinful condition the other day, in his burning, and he is but newly changed, and therefore he must needs have some dirt, and some filth upon him, as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning; and therefore consider him in that respect,

and though he have filthy garments now upon him; yet I will give him change of raiments, and take away his filthy garments. Thus the Lord Christ steps in to God the Father, and answers to all those accusations that are brought against him to God the Father. This is the third thing that he does by way of his intercession.

Again, he doth not only plead our cause, and take off accusations that are brought against us: but he does also call for absolution, and pardon of poor sinners, at the hand of God the Father, in a way of justice and equity: and therefore he is called, our Advocate: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 1. The work of an advocate differs from the work of a petitioner; an advocate does not petition the judge, but an advocate, he tells the judge what is law, what is right, and what ought to be done. So the Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven, and making intercession, is there as our Advocate: Lord (says he) this man, he hath sinned indeed, but I have satisfied for his sins, I have paid for them to the full, I have satisfied thy wrath to the full: now therefore, in a way of equity, and in a way of justice, I do here call for this man's pardon; thus Christ intercedes. And thus we see, briefly, wherein the intercession of Christ consisteth, and what he does when we say, That he intercedes for us in heaven.

Well, but suppose he does intercede, can he prevail in his intercession, hath he any potency, power or prevalency with God the Father in his intercession?

Yes very much: and therefore we find in that same iiird of Zechariah, that Joshua goes away with a fair mitre upon his head; verse 5, "And I said, Let them set a fair mitre (or a crown) upon his head: so they set a fair mitre (or a crown) upon his head, and clothed him with garments, and the angel of the Lord stood by." Satan at the beginning stood at his right-hand to accuse him; but this accuser of the brethren goes away with a double rebuke, and Joshua goes away with a crown: through the intercession of Jesus Christ he goes away with a crown upon his head.

All which will appear to you if we consider three things.

First, what great interest our Lord and Saviour Christ hath in the bosom of God the Father. Paul prevailed with Philemon for Onesimus, through the great interest that Paul

had in the bosom of Philemon. Our Lord and Saviour Christ, he hath lien in the bosom of God the Father from all eternity: he is his Son, his natural Son, his beloved Son, his Son that did never offend him: and therefore surely when he comes and intercedes for a man, he is most like to speed, to prevail. We know that David going out against Nabal and his house, Abigail comes forth, meets with David, and intercedes for Nabal; and Abigail did so powerfully intercede even for Nabal, that she turned David's heart quite round about. David swore he would not leave one of the house, and after Abigail had interceded a little for Nabal, in 1 Sam. xxv. 32, David said unto Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood." Pray what did Abigail say, that she turned David thus about, that her intercession was thus powerful? Says Abigail, "As for Nabal he is according to his name. And it shall come to pass (at the 30th verse) when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel, that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart to my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself." This shall be no grief at all unto thine heart, says she, and other words that she used, by which she prevailed here with David. But Abigail was a stranger to David: and Abigail she prays and intercedes for Nabal, a wicked, vile, foolish man. Shall Abigail, a woman, a stranger prevail thus with David for a Nabal? and shall not the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, not a stranger, nor a stranger to his bosom, but beloved from everlasting, shall not he prevail much more, when he comes and pleads the cause of the elect, and of the children of God, in the presence of God the Father, whom the Father loves also? Great is the rhetoric of a child: if a child do but cry Father, especially if the child be a wise child, he may prevail much with a tender-hearted father. The Lord Jesus Christ he is the Son of the Father, and he is the wisdom of the Father too; and God the Father is a tender-hearted Father. Oh! surely therefore, powerful are the intercessions of Jesus Christ with God the Father.

Secondly, the prevalency of Christ's intercessions with the Father will appear, if we consider the inclination and disposition that God the Father hath unto the same things that Christ prayeth and intercedeth for. If a child should come and intreat his father in a matter that the father hath no mind to, or that the father is set against, possibly he might not prevail: but if a beloved child shall come and pray the father in a business that the father likes as well as the child, surely then the child is very like to speed. Thus it is: the Lord Jesus Christ comes and he intercedes for us, and the Father hath as great an inclination and disposition unto the work that Christ intercedes for, as Christ himself hath; and therefore says Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will: I come not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." That which Christ did, that he had a mind to; it was rather the will of the Father than Christ's will: the Father is as strongly inclined and disposed to what Christ did and wills, as Christ himself. "Those that thou hast given me," says he, "I have lost none:" they are thine own, Lord, and therefore I pray for them. We have a notable expression to this end in the xth chapter of John and the 17th verse. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again." "I lay down my life:" here is his suffering and his satisfaction. "That I may take it again:" go up to heaven and take it again and intercede. "Therefore doth my Father love me:" Oh! what a round of love is here: God the Father out of love sends Christ into the world to die for man: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Well, Jesus Christ out of love to us he dies for us: "Who hath loved us and given himself for us." The Father loves the world in giving Christ; the Son loves the world in dying for us; and the Father he loves Christ again for loving us. Christ loves us, and the Father loves Christ again for loving of us. A mighty high expression! that the Father should love Christ for loving us. So then look wherein the love of Christ is seen unto poor sinners, the Father's inclination and disposition is unto that as much as Christ's. So that when he comes unto God the Father and does intercede, he must needs prevail, because the Father loves him for his inter-

ceding, the Father likes the matter as well as he, loves him the better for it.

Thirdly, this will appear also, if we consider upon what terms our Lord and Saviour Christ, our great High Priest, was taken and admitted into heaven, the holy of holiest: so it is called. He was honorably received into heaven, and he was received thither for to do the work of the high priest. He was honorably received when he came to heaven: "Sit thou down at my right-hand," says God the Father to him; a note of honor. When Solomon would express his honor to his mother, he set her down at his right-hand. Thus God the Father would express the honorable welcome that Christ had when he came to heaven: Sit thou down at my right-hand, says he. Now ye shall observe, that whensoever this is made mention of, the sitting down at the right-hand of God the Father; it is made mention of, not with the kingly office of Christ, but with the priestly office of Christ: as if he were set down there to do the work of the priestly office. One would think, I say, that this should be expressed with the kingly office of Christ, but you shall find it running along in the scripture still with the priestly office of Jesus Christ. Look into Hebrews viii. 1. Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: "We have such, an High Priest, who is set on the right-hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." It is named with the priestly office. And so again in the xth chapter of the Hebrews, at the 11th and 12th verses, "Every high priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin: but this man (speaking of Christ) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right-hand of God." It is carried along with the mention of the priestly office of Christ; as if he were sat down at the right-hand of God the Father in heaven, on purpose to do the work of the priestly office. When Jesus Christ came into heaven, into the holy of holiest, he came thither as our great High Priest; and he said unto God the Father, Lord, I am not now come in mine own name, for my own sake only, but I come as the great High Priest, having on this breast-plate the name of all the elect: and I come to intercede for poor sinners; I come as High Priest. Says God the Father to him, Welcome

upon those terms, welcome upon those terms; notwithstanding thou dost come in their names, come and sit down at my right-hand, says God the Father to him. Thus the Father is engaged, for he received him upon those terms into heaven, as our great High Priest. The Father therefore is engaged to hear his intercession, and so the intercession of Jesus Christ must have a great deal of power and prevalency with God the Father in heaven. This is the second thing.

But, thirdly, Does the Lord Jesus Christ intercede for us in heaven as our great High Priest?

Yes, and he does do this in a more transcendent and eminent way and manner than ever any high priest did before him.

For, first, he hath gone through more temptations than ever any high priest did. "He was tempted," says the text, "that he might succour those that are tempted," as an High Priest. If he was tempted that he might succour those that are tempted, succour them as an High Priest; then the more he was tempted, the more experimentally able he is for to succour those that are tempted. Never any high priest that was tempted like unto Christ. "He was (says the apostle) in all things tempted like unto us, sin only excepted." Poor soul, name any temptation that thy heart is scared at the thoughts of, and you will find that the Lord Jesus Christ he was tempted with that temptation. You will say, I am oftentimes tempted to doubt whether I be the child of God or no, and that very often. So was Christ too: you know the place in the ivth of Matthew, "If thou be the Son of God," and "If thou be the Son of God," twice that the devil would set an *if* upon Christ's Sonship. Oh! but I am tempted often times to use indirect means to get out of trouble. So was Christ too: "Command that these stones be made bread," says the devil to him. Oh! but sometimes I have been tempted even to lay violent hands upon myself. So did the devil tempt Christ too: "Cast thyself down off the pinnacle of the temple;" that was a temptation. Oh! but I am tempted unto such evil things, that truly I am afraid to speak of; such blasphemies, such horrid, and wretched blasphemies, as I think never came upon the heart of any child of God, so that I am afraid to think of them, and ashamed to mention them. And was not Christ so? was not he

tempted so? Says the devil to him, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Oh! horrid blasphemy! blush, blush, O sun: that the Lord Jesus, the God of glory, should fall down to the devil, and worship the devil; what wretched blasphemy was here, that he should speak this! and yet the Lord Jesus Christ, he was tempted to it. What shall I say, He was in all things tempted like unto us, sin only excepted. Now, there was never any high priest that was so tempted, and he was therefore tempted, that he might succour those that are tempted. He is more able as our High Priest to intercede, to put in for you, and to succour you, than ever any high priest was before him.

Again, as he hath gone through more temptations than ever any high priest did: so also, he is filled with more compassions. It behoved the high priest to be merciful: it is an office of love, and mercy. Now our Lord and Saviour Christ (says the apostle) is such an High Priest as cannot but be touched with your infirmities: the high priest that did go before him, sometimes, was not touched with their infirmities: Hannah came and prayed, and Eli's heart was not touched with her infirmity, at the first. But our High Priest cannot but be touched, he does sympathize with us under all our infirmities. He is afflicted in all our afflictions. It was the work of the high priest to sympathize with the people; and yet notwithstanding, there was a law, that the high priest might not mourn for his kindred, in that he might not, as others, sympathize or mourn. But now, our Lord Jesus, he does fully sympathize with us, and therefore goes beyond all the high priests that ever were before him.

Further, He is more faithful in his office, and place, than ever any high priest was. Aaron was an high priest, but unfaithful in the matter of the golden calf. But our Lord and Saviour Christ, he is more faithful than Moses was. In this iiird of Hebrews 1st and 2nd verses, (and so on) "Wherefore, holy brethren, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." He steps over Aaron; who was the high priest, and he compares him here to Moses in faithfulness. Now Moses was faithful in all his house: but our Lord and Saviour here, he is preferred before Moses in point of faithful-

ness; yet it is said, "Moses was faithful in all his house." When that the Lord commanded Moses any thing, as the Lord commanded so did he, and rose up early in the morning to do the commandment of God: he was faithful in all his house; and yet our Lord and Saviour was more faithful than Moses in the matter of his priesthood. For so it is brought in here, at the iiird verse, "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house." Verse the 5th. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after: but Christ as a son over his own house." Look now, as a child or a son is more faithful in his father's house than a servant will be: so (says the apostle) Christ is more faithful than Moses. And look as the builder of the house, does go beyond, and excel every beam, and stone in the house, or every part of the building: so does the Lord Christ in faithfulness, exceed Moses. You will say, there is a great difference between a stone in the building, and the maker of the house: look what difference there is between a stone, or a piece of wood, and the maker of the building: so great a difference there is (says the apostle) between Jesus Christ, in the matter of his priesthood, and Moses; yet notwithstanding, Moses is faithful in all his house. Oh! then how faithful is Jesus Christ, in the matter of his priesthood! He goes before all that ever went before him.

Again, take other high priests, and though they were never so good, they could not always intercede, they died; the high priest died, and another came in his room: but this man liveth for ever to make intercession.

Yea, take the high priest in the times of the old testament; and while he lived, he did not always intercede for the people: once in a year, the high priest came to enter into the holy of holiest to sprinkle the mercy-seat with blood, and caused a cloud to arise upon the mercy-seat, with his prayer, and intercessions for their acceptance: and then he went out of the holy of holiest, and laid aside his garments. But now, our great High Priest, is ascended into the holy of holiest never to put off his priestly garments: and he does not once a year sprinkle the mercy-seat with his sacrifice, but

every day: and therefore he goes beyond all the high priests that ever went before him.

And yet further: take the high priest in the old law, in the times of the old testament: and though they did offer sacrifice for some sins, and intercede; yet there was other sins again, that no sacrifice was to be offered for. If a man did kill another at unawares, there was a sacrifice. If a man sinned ignorantly, there was a sacrifice. But says the text in the xvth of Numbers 30th verse. "If any man sin presumptuously, he shall be cut off, and there shall be no sacrifice for him:" no sacrifice, no intercession by the high priest then. But we have such an High Priest, that makes intercessions for all sins. So he says himself: "Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." Every sin, though it boil up to blasphemy, it shall he forgiven; but without sacrifice there is no remission: and therefore he hath made a sacrifice; and so he presents the sacrifice, and intercedes for every poor sinner: and therefore he is such an High Priest, that transcends all the high priests that ever went before him.

In the fourth place, How doth all this conduce now to our comfort, or our holiness; to our grace, or peace?

First, To our comfort. Very much to our comfort. And therefore in the ist chapter of Zechariah good words, and comfortable are spoken upon this occasion: (verse 8.) says the prophet, "I saw by night, and behold, a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were there red horses speckled and white. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees, answered and said, these are they, whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest. And the angel of the Lord answered, and said, O Lord of hosts, how long, wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these three-score and ten years?" Here is intercession. "And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me, with

good words, and comfortable words." Give me leave to open the words a little, and we shall see how much it makes to our comfort, this intercession of Jesus Christ. At the 8th verse, "I saw (says he) a man riding upon a red horse." This is the Lord Jesus Christ presented thus to us. "And he stood among the myrtle trees." The saints and people of God they are called the myrtle trees, for their greenness, sweetness, and fruitfulness. "And these myrtle trees were in the bottom." That is, in a dark, in a low, and a poor condition: it is the condition of myrtle trees, and of the saints and people of God to be oft in bottoms, and in a dark and low condition. Well: "Behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white: and I said, O my Lord, what are these?" Now that this is Christ; first of all, he is called a Man, and an Angel too. Secondly, as Christ walked between the golden candlesticks, in the book of Revelation: so here he stood among the myrtle trees, among the saints. And behind him (attending upon him) were red horses, speckled, and white. That is, angels sent to and fro through the earth, upon his message, and upon his errand; and unto him they come and give an account, and to none but Christ. Then we shall see this angel, that stood among the myrtle trees, comes and intercedes: all the angels they come and bring in this report, that the church and people of God were in a low condition. "Then this angel that stood among the myrtle trees, answered and said, (at the 12th verse) O Lord of Hosts, how long, wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years?" It must needs be Christ, for no angel intercedes, but Christ alone. What is the fruit of this intereession? (at the 13th verse) "The Lord answered the angel that talked with me, with good words, and comfortable words." Aye, indeed, good words, and comfortable are the fruit of the intercession of Jesus Christ. It is a matter of great comfort this, that the Lord Christ, our great High Priest, is in heaven to intercede for us. Is it not a comfort to a poor man, to have a friend above, near the king, or in the court, that may be able to do him kindness? a man sometimes says, I had a friend indeed in the court, but now he is dead. Aye but, here is a friend that never dies: he ever lives to make intercession. Friends

may alter, and turn enemies; but he changeth not. Our Lord and Saviour Christ said unto his disciples, rejoice not in this, that the devils fall down like lightning before you: but rejoice in this, "That your names are written in heaven:" it is a matter of great joy to have one's name written in heaven: Oh! but what is it then, to have one's name written in the chief part of heaven, to have one's name written there upon the breast-plate of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, that is gone into the holy of holiest. Thus it is, the Lord Christ is now gone to heaven, entered into the holy of holiest, and carries our names into the presence of God the Father, and there pleads and intercedes for us. Oh! what matter of comfort is here!

But you will say unto me: This is exceeding good, and very comfortable in itself: but what is this to me? for I am afraid that the Lord Christ does not intercede for me: if indeed I could persuade myself, that the Lord Jesus were in heaven as my High Priest, to intercede for me, I think verily I should have comfort, though I were in the lowest bottom, though I were in hell itself: but Oh! I am afraid to bear myself upon the intercession of Jesus Christ, lest I should presume.

This is the great objection, and stands up continually, to resist the comforts of God's people: give me leave therefore, to deal with this objection all along, and to take it off, that so the comfort may fall more fully upon you.

First, I will shew, it is no presumption for us to bear ourselves upon the intercession of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Who those are that the Lord Christ does intercede for in heaven. And,

Thirdly, How willing, how infinitely willing he is to intercede for us: that so I may bring the comfort nearer to our own bosoms.

First, I say it is no presumption for us to bear ourselves upon the intercession of Jesus Christ: no presumption to believe. We know the story of the woman in the gospel, that came unto our Lord and Saviour, touching the hem of his garment for her cure, and she was cured thereby. But our Saviour perceiving virtue to be gone from him, he calls out the person, Who hath touched me? come forth; and the woman came forth trembling. Our Lord and Saviour Christ

does not say to this poor woman, How dare you thus touch me? how durst thou thus presume to do it? Consider, the woman had no command to do it, no precept to back her: the woman had no promise to engage her, that if she did touch the hem of his garment she should be cured. The woman had no example; never any before that touched the hem of his garment and was cured. No commandment, no promise, no example: surely now, if any man or woman should presume, it should be this woman, that had no commandment, nor promise, nor example; and yet the Lord Jesus Christ does not chide her away, does not tell her she had presumed; but, "O woman, thy faith hath saved thee, thy faith hath made thee whole." Let me speak this home: we have a command now to believe in Christ; and a promise: Those that come unto him, he ever liveth to make intercession for them. And we have examples of many that have come unto Jesus Christ, born themselves upon his intercession, and have gone away cured. What! was it no presumption for the woman to come and touch Christ, without a commandment, and a promise, and an example? and have you examples, and have you promises, and have you commandments to believe, and will you say this is presumption? Be not deceived, it is no presumption for thee, poor soul, to bear thyself at length upon Jesus Christ.

Secondly, to make this out a little more fully, I shall discover who those are that the intercession of Jesus Christ does belong unto. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 1. You will say, This is to be carried upon those that were spoken of before: and those were such as had fellowship with the Father: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," chap. i. ver. 3. "Now if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If any man that hath fellowship with the Father, or Christ, sin; they have an Advocate with God the Father. First therefore stand you by I pray, that we will take for granted, all you that ever had any fellowship with God the Father, or with Jesus Christ; this doctrine of the intercession of Jesus Christ, and the comfort hereof, does belong to you.

Moreover, in the xviith chapter of John, there we find that

our Saviour says, he prays for those that do believe, and should believe. Those that he prays for here, he intercedes for in heaven: "Neither pray I for these alone (at the 20th verse), but for them also which shall believe on me through thy word." I do not pray only for those that do believe now, but for them also which shall believe. Well then, here is a second sort, those that do believe, and those that wait upon the Lord in the ordinance, that they may believe, or shall believe: stand you by also, you are another sort of people that the intercession of Jesus Christ, and the comfort thereof, does belong unto.

But now yet further, if we look into the viith chapter of this epistle unto the Hebrews, at the 25th verse we shall find these words: "Wherefore he is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Who are those? Those that come unto God by him. Lay this, and the liiird chapter of Isaiah, the 12th verse, together: "He was numbered with the transgressors (speaking of Christ clearly), and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." It may be thou canst not say, I have fellowship with God the Father: it may be thou canst not say, I do believe, I am persuaded that I do believe; thou canst not say so: well, but can you say thus: Through the Lord's grace I do come unto God by Christ; I have been, and I am a great transgressor, but I come unto God by Christ; I am one of the coming transgressors: I have been a transgressor, but I am a coming transgressor, I come unto God by Christ. Stand you by also, this intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, it belongs unto you: and let me tell thee for thy comfort, poor soul, whatsoever thou hast been, that comest unto the Lord by Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, he is gone to heaven to intercede for thy soul.

But you will say, There is one thing that makes me afraid he will not intercede for me, I have been so great a transgressor: for I have been a transgressor against Jesus Christ, this High Priest: Oh! I have sinned against this great High Priest, Jesus Christ, and therefore I am afraid he will not intercede for me.

For answer to this, I shall only desire you to turn to the xvith chapter of Numbers, the 41st verse, and consider it

duly; we read there, that all the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron: Aaron was the High Priest: and, says the text, "all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord." They had murmured against Moses and Aaron. Then, at the 46th verse, "Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, put fire therein from off the altar, put on incense, go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun." And see what Aaron did: "And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation, and behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed." They had sinned against Aaron the high priest, and yet Aaron (but the typical high priest, he was but a type of Christ) he ran in, although they had sinned against him, and he stood between the dead and the living, and made an atonement for them. Oh! if there was so much bowels of compassions in the type, in Aaron, when they had sinned against him, as to go and intercede for them: how much more is there in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the typified High Priest, to poor souls, to intercede for them.

But now, this may be more fully made out to us, if we do but take in the third thing, and that is: The Lord Jesus Christ, he is infinitely willing to intercede for us. We have seen who those are unto whom the intercession of Christ belongs: namely, such as have had any fellowship with God the Father, or with Christ: such as do believe, or shall hereafter believe: and all those poor transgressors that come unto God the Father by Christ. Now observe, how infinitely willing the Lord Jesus Christ is to intercede for us that are thus: that will appear thus:

First, He must needs be willing to do that which he hath received his anointing for. It is said of Aaron that he was anointed; and that ointment ran down upon his beard, and unto the skirts of all his garment: not a piece of Aaron's garment but was perfumed with the ointment that Aaron was anointed with. Surely there is not a skirt of the garment of Jesus Christ, but the anointment wherewithal he, our

High Priest was anointed, does run down upon him. He is the Messiah, the anointment: so he is called in the xth of Isaiah. The anointment. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above all his fellows: above all the high priests that ever were before him. And he was anointed for this very end, that he might do the work of the high priest; which is, to intercede for the sins of the people. And therefore in that place in John, 1st Epis. ii. 1, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ." Christ signifies anointed. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father: but who is that? he is Jesus, that signifies *your* Saviour, and so he is willing to intercede. Aye, but it may be he is not able to do it, it may be he hath not received the anointing to do it. Yes, he is called Christ. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ:" or, if you will, Saviour, Anointing. So that he is anointed for this end and purpose, to be your Advocate. Now if a man do receive money for to lay out for the benefit of others, poor orphans, or the like; if a man be faithful, certainly he will lay out the money for them, according to the intention of him that did trust him with the money. The Lord Jesus Christ, he hath received the anointing, he is anointed as our great High Priest, to do the work of the priestly office: and this is one work, to intercede, and therefore he must needs be very willing to do it.

Again, the more any thing is the work of a man's relation, wherewithal he is clothed, the more (if he be faithful) is he willing to do the work. And I pray mind it a little. When men are exalted, and come to greatness or honor, then they give down the comforts of their relation unto those that depend upon them: if a father come to any great preferment, the comfort of the relation of the father then falls down upon the children, runs down then upon the fruit of his loins. And so, if one friend do come unto preferment, the comfort of the relation (or friendship) falls down. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, he is our High Priest; and he is now exalted, he is gone to heaven: and therefore all the comforts of all the relations that he stands in towards us, do now fall upon us. And therefore he is willing, he is very willing, because this is the work of his relation.

And further, It is the work of his office. What a man

does by office, that he does willingly; what a man does by office, he does industriously, he does not do it by the by: what a man does by office, he does it readily; according unto a man's place, or office, so will his interpretation be. Suppose now a child that hath very good parts, come before three men, of three several professions; a lawyer, a minster, and a merchant. The child having very good parts; the merchant says, he will make a very good merchant; the lawyer says, he will make a very good lawyer: and the minister says, he will make a very good scholar: according to their three relations, or places, or office, or work, their interpretation is. So now, if three men, of three several trades, whose work lies about wood, come and behold a fine green tree: one man says, it is good for this: and another says, it is good for that: and the third says, it is good for another use: according to his place and calling will his interpretation be. So now, when a poor soul comes before God: Moses (the law) looks upon him: and the devil looks upon him: and Jesus Christ looks upon him: the work of the law is to condemn; the work of the devil to accuse; and the work of Jesus Christ is to intercede, it is the work of his office. Now therefore, as soon as the devil sees such a soul, Oh, says he, here is a fine instrument for me, here is a fit subject for me to enjoy. As soon as Moses sees this man, Here is a fine subject for me to condemn unto all eternity. But when Jesus Christ looks upon such a soul, says he, Here is a fine soul for me to save unto all eternity, to intercede for! Why? Because it is his office, and what a man does by office, he interprets accordingly. Therefore what the Lord Jesus Christ does, he does by office, and he does it readily and willingly. And I will give you one demonstration of it; it was the end why Jesus Christ was taken into heaven, into the holy of holiest: that he might intercede. According to scriptures mentioned before, in Heb. ix. 24: "For Christ is not entered into holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He does not say thus, Christ is now gone to heaven, to be glorified there; Christ is now gone to heaven, to enjoy the bosom of his Father, for his own happiness. No, but he is gone into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us. This is the end of his ascension. And so again in the

viith of the Hebrews: "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us." What! is he in heaven to be glorified there? No, but the end why Christ is in heaven, is to make intercession for poor sinners: and therefore, he must needs be infinitely willing to do this, because it is the end of his going thither into the holy of holiest. Oh therefore be of good comfort, all you that do come unto God by him, for he is willing to intercede for you. And let not any thing discourage you. It may be you will complain, and say, Oh! but I am much opposed here in this world. What matter, so long as Jesus Christ does intercede for me in heaven, and speaks good words unto God the Father for me in heaven; what though I be opposed by men? It may be you will complain, and say, Oh! but I am much tempted, and cannot pray. Be humbled for it; but yet know this, that when you cannot pray, Christ prays for you; and he prays that you may pray. It may be you complain, and say, Oh! but I labour under such and such corruptions, and the devil he is busy with me, exceeding busy, and I cannot overcome them: and the devil stands at my right hand for to tempt me, and to lead me into such and such sins. Well, be it so, yet, notwithstanding the Lord Jesus Christ, he is at the right hand of our Father, and he is set down at the right hand of God the Father, till all his enemies be made his footstool; and your sins are his enemies: and therefore be of good comfort, O all ye people of the Lord. Is there ever a poor myrtle tree, a soul that grows in a bottom, in a poor dark condition? be of good comfort, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, he is entered into heaven, into the holy of holiest, there to intercede with God the Father for thee.

Aye but, you will say unto me, Does not this conduce to our grace and holiness too? and how does it do it?

This intercession of Jesus Christ; this work of the priestly office of Christ, and the consideration thereof, it does conduce exceedingly unto our grace and holiness. For,

First, what a mighty encouragement is here unto all poor sinners, for to come unto Jesus Christ. "He ever liveth to make intercession for those that come unto God by him." Oh! then, who would not come unto God by Christ? who would not come unto Jesus Christ? Methinks a poor sinner

should say, Indeed my sins were so great, that I was afraid for to come unto God; but now I hear that the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven, to make intercession for all those that come unto God by him, though I have been a drunkard, now I will go unto God by Christ; and though I have been a swearer, and though I have been an unclean wanton, yet I will go unto God by Christ. Indeed I thought that my time was past, for I have been an old swearer, and I have been an old drunkard, and I have been an old Sabbath-breaker, and I have been a sinner so long, that I was even afraid of going to God at all, and thought there was no mercy, nor no pardon for me: but seeing now that this is true, that the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven to make intercession for all those that come unto God by him, well, through the Lord's grace, now I will go unto the Lord Christ, I will go unto Jesus Christ. I indeed am a young man, and I thought it was to no purpose to go unto God, God would not regard poor ignorant ones, and I am a poor ignorant creature, and thought it was to no purpose for me to go unto God. But now I understand this, that the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven to make intercession for all those that come unto God by him; well then, though I am ignorant, yet will I go unto God by Christ; and though I am but a poor young thing, and scarce understand the terms of religion, yet will I go unto God by Christ. Oh! come unto Christ, come unto Christ. Behold here, in the name of the Lord, I stand and make invitation to poor sinners. Come, poor drunkard, swearer, Sabbath-breaker, unclean heart, the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven to make intercession for all that come unto God by him; and will not you come? Oh, how will you answer it at the great day! when it shall be said, The Lord Jesus Christ made a tender and offer of mercy to you, and you would not accept of it, you would not come unto him. Here is matter of great encouragement unto all poor sinners to come unto Jesus Christ.

Again, secondly, the more I apprehend or see with a spiritual eye that the Lord Jesus Christ does appear in heaven for me, the more am I engaged to appear upon earth for him. Mark, I pray, that you may see how this does conduce unto grace and holiness. Ah! shall the Lord Jesus Christ appear in heaven, before saints and angels and God

the Father for my soul, and shall I be afraid to appear before poor worms for him? Shall the Lord Jesus Christ own me in heaven, and shall not I own him upon earth? Shall the Lord Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest, take my name, and carry it upon his breast into the presence of God the Father, and shall not I take the name of Christ and hold it forth to the world? Oh! I beseech you consider what a mighty engagement is here to stand to and appear for the Lord Christ, and to own his cause in these backsliding times, because he is now in heaven appearing for you, and making intercession for you.

Thirdly, the more I consider or apprehend that the Lord Jesus Christ does lay out himself for me, the more am I engaged to lay out myself for him. The Scripture says, "He ever liveth to make intercession for you." He lays out his whole eternity for you. Methinks we have here before us, the greatest argument in the world for to make us to walk closely with God in Christ; for shall the Lord Jesus Christ spend of his eternity for me, and shall not I spend of my whole time for him? He ever liveth: "He ever liveth to make intercession." Before the world was made, his delight was in the habitable parts of the earth, among the children of men. He laid out himself in delighting upon you before the world was made. Well, in due time he comes down into the world; and here, while he was upon the earth, he laid out himself fully for you. Then he dies, and goes up to heaven, and, says he, "I go to prepare a place for you." He was at work for you before the world began: then he comes down upon the earth, and here he spends all his time for you: and now that he is gone to heaven, the text saith, "He ever liveth to make intercession for you;" he spends off all his eternity for you. Oh! does not the Lord Jesus grudge me eternity, to spend off his eternity for my soul; and shall I grudge the Lord Jesus Christ a little time, to spend a little time for him? Surely people do not think what Christ is doing in heaven for them, (you that are saints especially) if you did, you could not be paddling in the world so much. Shall the Lord Jesus Christ be appearing in heaven for me, and shall I be digging in the world? Shall he be making mention of my name unto God the Father, and interceding for me; and shall I be sinning

against him, shall I be contending with his children, shall I now be joining with his enemies, shall I be opposing his ways? Oh! if people would but think what the Lord Jesus Christ is doing in heaven for them, they would not rebel so in the world against him as they do. Wherefore, that you may be kept from your sins, and kept from the world, think of these things. The apostle says, "These things have I written unto ye, that ye sin not: and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." And so say I to you: I have been here delivering to you this doctrine concerning the priestly office of Jesus Christ; and these things have I preached unto you that you sin not. And therefore, that you may be kept from sin, and your hearts made more holy, think of the priestly office of Jesus Christ, he is gone into heaven to make intercession for you. And thus have I discovered the second particular of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. A third follows.

SERMON III.

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to godliness, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 17, 18.

WE have found already, that the work of the high priest was and is, to satisfy and to intercede for the sins of the people.

Now if we inquire further, we shall find also, that the work of the High Priest was and now is, To offer up the gifts of the people unto God; to present our prayers, praises, duties, services, and all spiritual performances unto God the Father, and to procure acceptance of him. This was done thus.—In the times of Moses, in the Tabernacle there were two parts or courts, as we read in the ixth chapter of the Hebrews. In the one which was called the holy of holiest, there was the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory, and the golden censer. In the other there was the brazen altar upon which they offered sacrifices, there was the

table of shewbread, the golden candlestick, and the golden altar upon which incense was. This is expressly laid down in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th verses of that ixth of Hebrews: "For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick and the table and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all, which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it is the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat." And as every day, morning and evening, there was a lamb offered, a sacrifice for the sins of the people, upon the brazen altar; so every day, morning and evening, there was incense also upon the golden altar: which was performed while the people were without at prayer, mingling that incense with their prayers; as it is in the ist chapter of Luke, the 8th, 9th and 10th verses: "It came to pass that while he (that is, Zacharias) executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord: and the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense." So that the incense was at a time when they were sweetly mingling their prayers and the incense together. But now, although that there was a sacrifice every day, yet once in the year the high priest came, and he took the blood of the sacrifice, and carried it into the holy of holiest, and sprinkled the mercy-seat therewith. And although there was incense too, from the golden altar, every day, yet once in the year the high priest came, and he took the golden censer, and putting incense into it from off the golden altar, went into the holy of holiest and caused a cloud of perfume to arise upon the mercy-seat. All which was a great type of Jesus Christ our High Priest: who though he offered up himself a sacrifice once for sin without, yet when he died and ascended, he carried the virtue of that his blood into the holy of holiest, into heaven, and sprinkled the mercy-seat therewith: although he began to make intercessions while he lived, as we read in the xviith of John; yet when he ascended up into heaven, the holy of holiest, then he did take his golden censer, and carried his intercession into

heaven, causing a cloud of sweet perfumes to arise upon the mercy-seat: which still he does, whilst we are praying here without, he mingling all our duties with his intercessions; and so taking altogether as one, presents it unto God the Father for our acceptance. And this he does now as our High Priest; for if we look into this book of the Hebrews, we shall find, that the apostle speaking of the High Priest, relating unto Jesus Christ; says, in the vth chapter and the 1st verse, that it was his work to offer gifts: "That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices." And so in the viiith chapter and the 3rd verse: "Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices." Thus we have another great work, of our great Priest; which is, to offer up all our prayers, our duties, our gifts unto God the Father, which if ye will, we may call another part of Christ's intercession; but I handle it distinct.

Now that I may open and clear this great gospel mystery, I shall endeavour to discover:

First, What Jesus Christ, our High Priest, doth, when he does offer up our gifts unto God the Father.

Secondly, What abundance of favour and acceptance this our great High Priest himself hath in heaven.

Thirdly, That he doth improve all that his own acceptance, for our acceptance; planting all our duties upon his own acceptance, upon that acceptance that he hath with the Father.

Fourthly, What abundance of acceptance therefore we have, in all our duties by him.

Fifthly, How this doth conduce to our grace and to our comfort.

First, What doth our Lord and Saviour Christ, our great High Priest, when he offers up our gifts unto God the Father?

First, He doth take our persons, and carries them in unto God the Father, in a most unperceivable way to us. He knows that if our persons be not first accepted, our duty cannot be accepted: Love me, and love my duty; love me, and love my service: hate me, and hate my service. In the covenant of works, God did first accept of the work, and then of the person; the person for the work: but in the covenant of grace, God doth first accept of the person, and then the work. Now, therefore, that our work and our duty may be accepted with God the Father; the Lord Christ, our

High Priest, doth first take our person and our name, and carries them into the presence of God the Father. This was plainly shadowed out unto us by that of the high priest; who went into the holy of holiest, with the names of all the tribes upon his breast. Which the apostle speaks out plainly: "In whom we have access with boldness." The word access, as some observe, is manuduction, hand-leading: In whom we have an hand-leading; or by whom we are led by the hand unto God the Father. As a child, having run away from his father, is taken by the hand of a friend, or of his elder brother, and brought again into the presence of his father: so, all we having run away from God, are taken, and led again into the presence of the Father by the hand of Jesus Christ. He is that ladder that Jacob saw, upon whom we do ascend into the bosom of God, and go into heaven. Our High Priest, Jesus Christ, doth first take our persons, and lead us into the presence of God the Father.

Secondly, As he doth take our persons, and lead, and carry us into the presence of God the Father: so, when we do perform any duty, he doth observe what evil, or failing there is in that duty, and draws it out, takes it away before he presents the duty unto God the Father. A child that would present his father a nosegay or posy, goes into the garden, and he gathers flowers and weeds together; but coming to his mother, she takes them, and picks out the weeds, and binds up the flowers by themselves, and so it is presented to the father. Thus it is with us: we go to duty, and we gather weeds and flowers together: but the Lord Jesus Christ, he comes and picks out the weeds, and then he presents nothing but flowers unto God the Father.

And this we have plainly set forth unto us, by that of the high priest taking away the iniquities of the holy things of God's people, in the xxviiith chapter of Exodus: "Thou shalt make a platform of pure gold (at the 36th verse) and grave upon it like the engravings of a signet HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be." Then at the 38th verse: "And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead (that is, the high priest), that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts: and it shall be al-

ways upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord." Thus taking away the iniquity of their holy things. So it is said concerning our Saviour Christ, in the iiird chapter of Malachi, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th verses: "Who may abide the day of his coming?" plainly understood of Christ, as appears by the 1st verse. Then at the 3rd: "He shall sit as a refiner, and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old." Then shall their offerings be pleasant. When? When he hath purged their sacrifices and their offerings. This in the days of his flesh, and now much more. This is the second thing, that the Lord Christ, our great High Priest doth in offering up our gifts unto God the Father, he takes out the weeds.

Thirdly, As he takes away the iniquity of our holy things, so he observes what good there is in any of our duties, or performances; and with that he mingles his own prayers and intercessions; his own incense; and presents all as one work mingled together unto God the Father. This we have so fully in the viiith chapter of the Revelation, that I need name no other place: "Another angel (at the 3rd verse) stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke (at the 4th verse) of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out out of the angel's hand." This must needs be understood of Christ; for no angel does intercede but Christ, who is called, "The angel of the covenant." It is said, he stood at the altar, having a golden censer: which none of the high priests had: and there was given unto him much incense, and this he offered with the prayers of all the saints; and the smoke of the incense came with the prayers of the saints, and ascended up before the Lord. He alludes unto the way, and custom of the Jews, and the high priest: shewing, that the Lord Jesus Christ doth all this for us, as our great High Priest: that is the meaning of it. So that this is plain what

he doth, when as our great High Priest, he offers up our gifts unto God the Father.

But in the second place: Suppose he doth so, what favor or acceptance hath this our great High Priest in heaven?

He hath very much: "Father (says he) I thank thee that thou hearest me always." He never spake a word unto God the Father, but the Father heard him always. We read (as I remember) but of two places in the New Testament where the Lord by an audible voice gives testimony of Jesus Christ his Son: and in both those places we have the same words uttered, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased:" and again; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We may know what favour a man hath with another, by the trust that he doth commit to, and repose upon him: Joseph had great favour in the eyes of Pharaoh; and how did it appear? it appeared by this, because Pharaoh trusted him with so much. Now God the Father hath trusted Jesus Christ, this our great High Priest, very much. This I shall evidence in four particulars, viz. What a great trust God the Father hath put upon him.

First, It was an agreement between God the Father, and Christ, the second Person, before the world was, that in due time he should come into the world, take flesh upon him, and die for sinners: and he did so. But before Christ came into the world, there were thousands of souls saved; how came they to be saved? They came to be saved by the blood of Christ, and before Christ had died. So then, God the Father saved them upon Christ's bare word, that he would come into the world, and die for them. What a mighty trust was here! That so many hundred thousand souls should be saved, upon a bare word of Christ that he would come into the world, and die for them afterward.

Again, the trust appears in this: that he was made when he did come into the world, the great Lord Treasurer of all the grace and comfort, that should be given out unto the children of men. When Pharaoh trusted Joseph, all the whole kingdom was put into his hand, with the corn thereof, and not a grain was to be given out to any but as Joseph gave it out: which argued a mighty trust. So now, that not any grace or comfort, given out to the children of men,

but only by the hand of Christ, it argues a mighty trust that the Father put upon him.

But yet further, when our Lord and Saviour Christ died, and ascended unto God the Father to heaven; as soon as ever he came into heaven, saith the Father to him, Thou hast now suffered, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession:" all the world at one word. Ask of me (saith he) and at the first word I will give thee the whole world. It was a mighty, and a great trust that the Father did put upon him.

Yea, as if all this were not enough; the Father did put the keys of heaven and of hell into his hand: the keys of heaven and hell into the hand of Christ. So we read in the ist of Revelation 18th verse. "I am he that liveth and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." There is no man that goes to hell, but he is locked in by Jesus Christ: and there is no man goes to heaven, but Christ hath the keys of heaven, and he locks him in there unto all eternity. The Lord Jesus Christ, he hath the keys of hell, and of heaven; he hath the keys of all men's eternity hanging at his girdle. Oh! what an infinite trust is here, that God the Father hath put upon him! Then let us conclude, if that trust do argue favour; and the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, hath such a great trust as this put into his hands by the Father; what infinite acceptance must he needs have with God the Father.

In the third place: Suppose that he have all this favour and acceptance in heaven, doth he improve this his favour, and acceptance, for our acceptance, and for our favour?

Yes, he improves all this his favour and acceptance, for our acceptance, and does plant all our prayers, and duties, upon his own acceptance. Lord, (saith he unto his Father concerning believers) "I will, that where I am, they may be also: I will, O Lord, that they may be one, even as thou Father and I am one." He doth not count himself full, and happy, but in the happiness, and fulness of the church. And therefore, as Christ is called, The fulness of God the Father: so the church is called, The fulness of Jesus Christ: in the 1st of the Ephesians, and the last verse; "Which is

his body the fulness of him that filleth all in all." When our Lord and Saviour Christ came to die, and the heart and love of God the Father was let out unto him: ye shall find, if ye look upon that xviith of John, and read it all over, that he spends his time, not so much in praying for himself: the time was but short, and his prayer short, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass: if not, yet not my will, but thine be done." But he spends most of the time, in praying and interceding for those that did believe, or should afterward believe. The favour and acceptance which the high priest had, in the time of Moses, was not for himself: he had a mitre upon his head, and a golden girdle upon his loins —priestly garments; and he had great acceptance when he went into the holy of holiest; but it was not for himself, he did improve it all for the people: he was to lay it out all for the people, and not for himself. Our High Priest, goes beyond all other high priests in this particular also: for now, as for other high priests, though they went in with their incense, and covered the mercy-seat with a cloud; yet it was but once in the year: but our High Priest, is always in the holy of holiest, and never goes out of it, ever covering the mercy-seat with his intercessions. Take their high priest, and though he were very holy as Aaron was; yet sometimes he made the people naked unacceptable: but our great High Priest, never makes his people naked, but always clothes them with his own righteousness.

Take their high priest, and though he did go into the holy of holiest for the people, yet he never led the people into the holy of holiest, they stood without: but our great High Priest, is not only gone into the the holy of holiest himself, but doth also lead every poor believer into the holy of holiest; as we read in the xth of the Hebrews, and the 19th verse: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus Christ." The people might not enter into the holiest, in the time of the Jews: but our great High Priest, hath improved his favour for us thus far, that every man may come into the holy of holiest.

Now, if our great High Priest in this respect go beyond all the high priests that ever were before him, and they did improve their interest, and their favour, and their acceptance for the people, much more doth the Lord Jesus Christ our

High Priest, improve the favour, interest, and acceptance that he hath in heaven, for our acceptance, and the acceptance of all our duties. And that is a third particular.

But, if that be so; then surely we have great acceptance in all our duties: but have we so?

Yes, very great; in, and through the Lord Jesus Christ our High Priest. And therefore, if we look into the xivth of John, our Lord and Saviour saith, "Whatsoever ye ask in my name (at the 13th verse) that will I do." Aye, but may we be sure of this? He repeats it again (in the 14th verse) "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." Yea, that ye may see what great acceptance we have now through him, in all those duties that we offer up to God the Father: saith he in the xvith chapter and the 26th verse. "At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loves you." It is a mighty high speech. I do not say, that I will pray for you: ye shall have so much favour and love in heaven, from the Father immediately, that he will hear you presently. Aye, but is not all upon Christ's account? Yes, and therefore saith he, at the 13th verse of the xivth chapter, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." So that all is upon Christ's account. Great was the testimony of Christ's acceptance which he had from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now if we look in the Scripture, we shall find, that the same words are given unto the saints. Is the Lord Jesus Christ called the Son of God? My beloved Son: so are believers too; "As many as receive him, have power to be called the sons of God." Is he called, the beloved Son of God? "This is my beloved Son:" so are the saints also; in the xxxist chapter of Jeremy, at the 20th verse. "Ephraim my dear son, a pleasant child." Ephraim; that is Israel, my dear son, a pleasant child. Well, is it said, "In whom I am well pleased?" my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: the same word also is given to men. When our Lord and Saviour Christ was born into the world, the angels they came and sung at his birth, and they sung "Good-will towards men;" so we read it; but it is the same word that is used concerning Christ himself, "My beloved Son, in

whom I am well pleased." So that whatsoever word there is in all this speech, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; whatsoever word there is in that sentence concerning Christ, it is given also unto the saints, unto believers; so greatly does he improve his own favour and acceptance for our acceptance, and so great acceptance have we through Christ.

Yea, as the Lord Jesus Christ is said to be made sin for us, in the abstract; so are we said to be made righteousness by him; in the abstract too: as we have it in the ist of the Canticles, and the 3rd verse. "Therefore do the virgins love thee:" so we read it in our English translation; but in the Hebrew it is, "Therefore do the righteousnesses love thee." The saints and believers through Christ, are called, righteousnesses, in the abstract. So that here is the great acceptance, that the saints, and believers do find through this acceptation of Jesus Christ our High Priest.

But, suppose a man be very poor, and lives in some mean cottage; which hath but one room to lie, dine, and sup in; and that a smoky, dark room too: and this poor creature comes and prays unto God: will the great and glorious God of heaven and earth take notice of such a prayer, from such a worm as this? and shall he find acceptance with God the Father?

For answer to that, look into the iind of the Canticles, and the 14th verse. "O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance," (they are the words of Christ) "let me hear thy voice:" why? "for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." But I pray, where now is the church? In the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs: in a hole under the stairs (as it were) in a poor distressed place, an hidden place; now (says he) here thy voice is sweet, and thy countenance comely.

Well, but suppose that a duty, or service be performed by one that is weak; weak in grace, or weak in parts and gifts: for that is my case, (will some say) I am one of very weak parts and gifts, and I have little memory, or ability of speech; there are some men indeed, that are of great parts, and graces, and when they pray, I make no question but their prayers do find acceptance; but as for me, I am one of very

mean abilities; Oh! can there be any acceptance of such prayers as mine are through Jesus Christ? Will God answer such stammerings, lispings, half words, broken imperfect petitions?

Yes, we know that the pair of turtles were accepted in the time of the law, by those that could offer no more. Surely much more now, will a poor turtle be accepted in the time of the gospel, and those that could but bring goats-hair towards the making of the tabernacle, they were welcome: and shall it not be so now, much more in the times of the gospel? That which is little in regard of quantity, it may be great in regard of proportion; as the widow's mite was. The sun falls (we know) with a common influence upon all the herbs, and plants: but there is a several sweetness, and flowers that are of a several, and different growth: there is the rose, and there is the violet: the violet is not so tall as the rose, the violet lies on the ground; but though the violet be not so tall as the rose, the violet hath its sweetness: and it may say to the rose, though I be not so tall, yet I have my sweetness as well as thou hast. So now, there is a common influence from Jesus Christ upon all the saints, and they have their several sweetness; one as the rose, and the other as the violet: it may be, here lies a poor christian upon the ground like the violet, and is not so tall in gifts and parts as the other is; but yet notwithstanding, he hath his sweetness. Christ takes that lovingly that comes from love, whatever it be, though it be never so weak.

Well, but suppose that a man's duty, or service be performed with many failings, infirmities, hardness of heart, straitness of spirit, distracting thoughts; this is my case: Oh! is there any acceptance for such a duty as this is? will the Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, take such a duty as this is, and carry it in unto God the Father, and is there any acceptance for such a duty as this?

We know how it was with Nicodemus, and the woman that came trembling, and touched the hem of Christ's garment. And we must know that in every duty, that we do perform, there are two things: there is the sacrifice; and there is the obedience in offering the sacrifice. Though the sacrifice may be imperfect, yet your obedience in offering the sacrifice, may be perfect, with gospel-perfection. It is in re-

gard of our duties, as in regard of our persons; never think that God will deal otherwise with our duties, than he deals with our persons. The Lord came and justified the ungodly, when he justified you: he comes, and he finds a poor soul in a sinful condition, and he imputes his righteousness unto that soul, and justifies an ungodly one, not justifying him so as to go on in sin; it is the word of the apostle, "He justifies the ungodly." So the Lord comes and finds a great deal of ungodliness in your duty, and he imputes his righteousness unto that duty: and he justifies the duty, which in your eyes is an ungodly duty. This indeed is the wonder of all, that he should deal thus by us: for, did we ever hear of any garment, that would make the crooked straight? If a man have a crooked back; come and put velvet upon him, silk, scarlet upon him, it may make him handsomer, but it will not change his back, and make him straight. But when the Lord Christ comes, he finds all our souls crook-backed, as it were, and he puts on his righteousness, and this garment makes that which was crooked to become straight: it makes the very crook-backed duty, to become a straight duty. Did we ever hear, or read, of any seal, that when it was set upon the wax, would change the wax into gold, or into silver like the seal? it may leave its impression, but it does not change the wax into its own metal. If there be a stamp set upon silver or gold, the metal remains as it was before: but if a stamp be set upon brass, it does not make it silver; or if it be set upon silver, it does not make it gold. Aye, but when the Lord Jesus Christ comes unto a duty, and sets his own stamp, and his own righteousness upon a duty, that which was brass before; full of failings, and much unrighteousness before; changes it into gold, into silver. He only hath the philosopher's stone (as I may so speak): all that Christ touches turns into gold; turns all our duties into gold: and when he hath done so, he presents them unto God the Father. This our great High Priest doth. And this is the fourth thing.

But how doth all this make for our comfort, or for our grace?

Surely, we cannot but see already how it doth make for our comfort.

Is it not a comfortable thing, for a man to know, that his

duties are not lost? that his prayer is not lost? that his hearing the word is not lost? that his searching the Scriptures is not lost? that his conference and communion is not lost? A man is unwilling to lose any thing: and the more precious it is, the more unwilling to lose it. If we have a venture at sea: we are unwilling to lose our venture: and the greater our venture is, the more unwilling to lose it. If a man have but a quarter of his estate in a vessel, he is unwilling to lose it; more unwilling if he have half his estate; most if he have all, and his children there in the vessel too. Now as men are unwilling to lose their wordly venture: so a man that is sensible of his soul, is very unwilling to lose his soul's venture; to lose his prayers, and to lose all his duties. Friends, here is an insuring office; the Lord Jesus Christ is our great insurer in this respect: and he doth as he is our High Priest, offering up our gifts unto God the Father, assure us that none is lost, not any lost. Indeed, if we had such an high priest, as were not able to take notice of the circumstances of our duties, much might be lost: but this our Lord Christ, our great High Priest, doth not only take notice of our duty whatever it be; but of all the circumstances of our duties, and so presents them unto God the Father, in the full latitude, in all the gracious circumstances of them. Therefore saith he, unto the angel of the church of Pergamos in the iind of the Revelation, and the 13th verse; "I know thy works." Why, but Lord, though thou dost know our works, yet it may be thou dost not take notice where our work is done: Lord, it may be thou dost take notice of my prayer, but Lord, thou dost not take notice where I dwell, and live, and in what family I do pray unto thee; Lord, I am in a wicked, and a wretched family, that does oppose prayer: Lord, may be thou dost take notice of my prayer, but thou dost not take notice of this circumstance: yes, (says he) "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." Well, "and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days, wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." It is remarkable, the Lord Jesus Christ takes notice, not only of our duty; but of every circumstance of the duty, and so he presents it unto God the Father, not only the duty, but the circumstance of the duty; and there-

fore there is not a hair of your duty lost, not one grain of your duty lost: is not this an unspeakable comfort unto a poor soul, that knows that nothing is lost of all the prayers it hath made unto God, that there is no loss at all? The very pantings of our hearts at the throne of grace, are received into the bosom of our heavenly Father.

Further, is it not a comfort for a man to have liberty to go unto the mercy-seat, and there for to meet with God? It is said of wicked men, "That they sit in the seat of the scornful." There is (it seems then) the seat of the scornful; and there is a mercy-seat: a drunkard, when he is with his drunken company, and sits upon the ale bench (it may be) scorning, and jeering at some of the godly, making songs on them, he is set upon the seat of the scornful; that is a cursed seat. Aye, but there is another seat, there is a mercy-seat; and there is never a poor saint and child of God, but he may go in to the mercy-seat of the Lord Jesus Christ that hath all the favour and acceptance in heaven; he carries him in to the mercy-seat, and God the Father will never put him by: what comfort is here!

Besides, is it not a great comfort to a man; for to know how it shall go with him at the great day of judgment? When there shall be hundred thousands at the right hand of Christ; and hundred thousands at the left hand of Christ; when all faces shall gather paleness? Oh! (says one) that I did but know, how it shall go with me at that day! This doctrine tells us, That the Lord Jesus Christ is our judge at that day, and he that shall judge us then, he takes our prayers and all our duties now, and carries them in unto the presence of God the Father, and by him we have acceptance, and according to these we shall be judged. Surely then, if he takes our duties and carries them in for acceptance, unto God the Father, he will never judge you for them, and condemn you for them at that day. Here is comfort!

Once more; is it not a comfort, for a poor beggar to be relieved at a rich man's door? We are all beggars in regard of heaven: and the Lord Jesus Christ, he does not only come forth and serve us, but he takes us (poor beggars) by the hand, and leads us in to his Father. Oh! what comfort is here! what comfort is here!

Indeed if I were able to say, that the Lord did accept my

duty, this were comfort indeed: if I were able to conclude, that the Lord Jesus Christ did take my prayers, and my duties, and carry them in unto God the Father; this were sweet consolation: but how shall I know that?

If the Lord Jesus Christ be our High Priest, then we may say also, that he takes our duties, and carries them in for acceptance unto God the Father: if we may say that Jesus Christ hath satisfied for us, and doth intercede for us, then we may say also, that he takes our duties, and carries them for acceptance unto God the Father.

But yet a little further, to bring this comfort nearer to your hearts; give me leave to appeal to you:

First. Whosoever thou art that makes this objection: Didst thou ever find a spiritual fire come down from heaven (as it were) upon thy heart in duty, or after duty? In the times of the Old Testament, if they offered up a sacrifice, and a material fire came down from heaven and burnt up the sacrifice to ashes, it was a certain testimony that the sacrifice was accepted. Now in the times of the gospel we must not expect material fire to come down upon our duties: but hath the Lord at any time caused an inward, and spiritual fire to fall down upon thy heart, warming thy spirit in duty? there the Lord speaks thus much to thee; thy sacrifice is turned into ashes, and it is accepted by Jesus Christ.

Again, did you never find in your heart (you that make this objection) to pray, and cry, and intercede for others, for the godly especially? Look what disposition there is in your hearts towards the members of Christ, there is the same disposition in Christ's heart towards you. Ah! do you think that there is love in your bosom towards the saints; and that there is none in Christ's heart towards you? Do you think that your bowels are more large than Christ's? Canst thou find in thine heart to go unto God, when thou seest a saint in misery, to go to God, and pray, and cry, and intercede for him? and do not you think that the Lord Jesus hath as much bowels towards you, to go and intercede for you, and present your prayers unto God the Father.

Further, do not you look upon your own duties, as coming from yourselves, most unworthy? Beloved! it is in regard of duties, as it is in regard of persons: when a man

does judge himself to be most unworthy, then Christ counts him worthy. God counts him worthy in Christ. As you read in the ist of the Canticles, says the spouse there, verse 5. "I am black (O ye daughters of Jerusalem) as the tents of Kedar: Look not upon me because I am black," verse 6. Now would you see Christ's opinion of her, that counts herself black, saith she, black and black again: but Christ saith concerning her; verse 8. "O thou fairest among women." She calls herself black, and Christ calls her fair, and "the fairest among women." Now, when a man doth count himself most unworthy, God counts him most worthy: and when a man looks upon his own duties, and sacrifices, as most unworthy, they are looked upon by Jesus Christ as most worthy; poor prayers in our eyes, are precious in God's eye.

A word more: do not ye think, that grace is larger now, in the times of the gospel, than it was in the times of the law? If ye doubt it, as unto this particular; look upon the xxxth chapter of Exodus, compared with the xlist of Ezekiel. In the xxxth chapter of Exodus, the Lord commands an altar to be made to burn incense upon; "Of shittim wood shalt thou make it:" verse the 1st. "A cubit shall be the length thereof," verse the 2nd. The altar is for incense; it is the matter that now we are upon: "A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and two cubits shall be the height thereof." Now in the xlist chapter of Ezekiel, he speaks of the altar in the times of the gospel: and (saith he) at the 22nd verse, (it is the altar of incense that there is prescribed to be made, the altar of wood, of shittim wood.) "The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits." And yet again, this altar of incense in the times of the gospel, is to be as large again, as that in the times of the law; as high, and as long, and as large again. In the times of the law, times of the Old Testament; a poor soul might go unto the high priest, and might challenge a right in him, and might say, That his service, and his duty, and his sacrifice was accepted by the high priest. If in the times of the Old Testament a man might say so; much more may a poor soul now go unto Jesus Christ our great High Priest, and say, that his service and his duty, and sacrifice, is accepted through him. Here

is abundance of comfort unto the saints: be of good comfort, all you that do believe.

But, how doth this make unto our holiness, unto holiness of life? We confess indeed, that there is abundance of comfort in this, that the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, takes all our gifts, and all our prayers, and presents them to God the Father, and that in his acceptance, we have acceptance: but I pray, how doth all this conduce to our holiness of life?

Much every way:

First, in case I be ungodly, a wicked man: here is that that may for ever keep me, from opposition to the good ways of God. I have said sometimes (may a wicked man say) concerning godly men's duties, That it was their hypocrisy: and I have said concerning such and such professors, this is your pride, and this is your singularity; and I have opposed, with all bitterness, and earnestness, the prayings, and wrestlings of some of God's people; but is this true, that the Lord Jesus Christ, takes every prayer, of the meanest of God's children, and carries it into the bosom of God the Father? and shall I spit upon that that Christ owns? shall I dare to oppose that that the Lord Jesus Christ presents unto his Father? The Lord in mercy pardon me: I have sinned and done foolishly, and for aught I know, I may have spoken evil of that duty, that Christ hath carried into the presence of God the Father: Oh! through the Lord's grace then, for ever will I leave to make any opposition, against any of the good ways of God again, and I will never speak one word against the persons, meetings, or supplications of the godly again.

Again, In case a man be ungodly, a wicked man: here is mighty encouragement, for to come unto Jesus Christ; aye, and to come presently. For is Jesus Christ the ladder that Jacob saw, by whom we go up to heaven? doth he take all our duties, and prayers, and present them to God the Father for acceptance? Then, till I do come to Christ, all is nothing, all is lost: if I be a drunkard, and will not come to Christ, prayer is all lost; If I be a swearer, and will not come to Christ, an unclean wretch, and will not come to Christ; all my prayers, and all my duties are lost: Oh! the Lord pity me (may many a poor soul say) I have lost too many prayers already, through the Lord's grace, now

I will lose no more: Oh! I come to Christ, Lord I come, I come. This is a mighty encouragement, to make every man now for to come unto Jesus Christ; because the Lord Jesus our High Priest, takes every duty, and carries it into the bosom of God the Father for acceptance. Thus for ungodly.

Secondly, in case a man be godly; this truth doth conduce to our further holiness, and growth in grace.

If I be godly; then here I see infinite reason, why I should be much in duty; not only pray, but be much in prayer. Why? for the Lord Christ taketh all, and carries all into the bosom of the Father, mingles his own odours, intercessions with it, although it be but a sigh, and a groan. The apostle upon this account, makes this use of it? having spoken of Christ our High Priest? Therefore (saith he) "let us come with boldness unto the throne of grace." The word signifies, to speak all one's mind? let us come speaking all. Having such an High Priest indeed, as will carry all into the presence of God the Father, for acceptance, every sigh, and every groan? then who would not be much in prayer? speak all to Christ, be free with Christ, "come with boldness?" There is many a poor soul, that is much discouraged, and he dares not go to prayer, many times, afraid to go to the throne of grace. The reason is because he looks upon his prayer, or duty, as it lies upon his own heart, or as it comes from himself. Whereas, my beloved, it is with your prayers, and duties, as it is with fire: your kitchen fire is troubled with abundance of smoke, and there is filth about it; fire upon the hearth hath much smoke: but fire above, in the element of fire, there is no smoke. So, your prayer, when it lies upon your own hearth (as I may say) there is a great deal of smoke; but when it gets once into the hands of Jesus Christ, there is its element, and it is freed from all its smoke. Or as it is with a man's body: so long as he lives here upon the earth, he is feeble, and weak, and many times sickly: as soon as he is come into heaven, all his weakness is taken away, and his body being in heaven, it is presently glorified, and strength put upon it, and all his diseases are gone. So it is with our prayers: so long as they are here below, in our own bosoms, they are full of weakness; but as soon as our prayer is out of our mouth, it is in the hand of Christ, it is in heaven, it is glorified, the weak-

ness is now done away; Oh! it is a glorified prayer; when once it is gone from you, it is in the hand of Christ. And therefore, this is a mighty encouragement unto all those that are godly, to be, not only in prayer, but to be much in prayer, come with boldness unto the throne of grace.

Again, If ye be godly; yea, if ye be ungodly: here I see infinite reason, why I should receive every truth that comes from Christ, though accompanied with many failings in him that speaks it. The Lord Jesus Christ, he accepts of every prayer, and duty that comes from me; though it have many weaknesses: yea, he takes my prayer, and carries it into the presence of God the Father for acceptance, my poor prayer, labouring with many weaknesses: then when a truth comes from Christ, shall not I accept of it? what though the minister, or preacher that speaks it, labour with this or that weakness? There is pride, or there is some miscarriage in the delivery, or the like: shall the Lord Christ take my prayer, labouring under infirmity, and accept thereof, and carry it into the presence of God the Father for acceptance, notwithstanding all the failings of my duty? and shall not I accept of truth that comes from Christ, notwithstanding all the failings of the poor messenger that brings it?

Further, the more evangelical you are in your obedience, the more holy ye are in your lives. This truth that is now before ye, well studied and considered, will make you more obedient in an evangelical way. And ye shall find therefore, that the Lord himself from heaven does make this use of it: pray consult with the xviith of Matthew, and the 5th verse, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." Those words follow, "Hear him." Hearing notes faith, and obedience; not bare hearing with the ear. Compare this, and the same speech together, which ye have in the iiird of Matthew and the 17th verse. "Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Hear ye him, is not there in the iiird of Matthew; but here in the xviith of Matthew, these words are added, Hear ye him: what should the reason be, that hear ye him, should be added here in the xviith of Matthew, and not in the iiird of Matthew? Give me leave to give you some reason for it, so far as may make to our present purpose: not to say any thing of that which Moses said, In his days a prophet will

the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me, hear ye him. And now here, in the xviith of Matthew, at the transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared, which they did not in the iiird of Matthew.

First, consider that the emphasis may lie upon the word *hear*, and not upon the word *him*, only: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him;" his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And Christ appeared in great glory, and they stood looking upon him; nay (says the Lord from heaven) do not make it a gazing matter, but hear him: do not stand looking upon him, but hear him. He does not appear in such a glory in the iiird of Matthew, when he was baptized; and therefore those words are not added there.

But again, here now in the xviith chapter of Matthew, at the transfiguration, appear Moses, and Elias. Behold (at the iiird verse) "There appeared unto them, Moses and Elias talking with him." Moses that gave the law; Elias that restored it. "Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus; Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Peter and so the rest of the disciples, began for to equalize Moses to Jesus Christ: one for Moses, and one for Elias, and one for Jesus Christ; no more for Christ than for Moses. Now the Lord takes Peter off from all his mistakings: Your eye is upon Moses (saith he) but I (saith the Lord God Almighty) am well pleased in my Son: this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. I am well pleased with you, and with your duties, through this my Son, and not through Moses; and therefore hear Christ, and not Moses. He lays this in upon it, that therefore they should be evangelical, and hear Jesus Christ, because the Lord Christ gives acceptance unto all, and by him God is well pleased with them.

Again further, the more glory Christ does appear in, the greater reason there is why we should hear him. Now here the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in glory; his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light. In the iiird of Matthew, he was there baptized, and he did not appear in glory: but now here he appears in glory; and therefore says the Lord, now hear him; this is your glorious

Saviour, hear him. Beloved! what greater glory can Jesus Christ appear to your souls in, than this, the glory of his love? he takes every one of your duties, and your prayers, and he carries them into the bosom of God the Father, and by him you have acceptance. Oh! what a glorious Saviour have ye! therefore hear him: this is that, if anything, will make ye very obedient to Christ, more than to Moses, to be evangelical in all your duties.

Yet further, the more a man can rejoice in spiritual privileges with humility; and the more humble a man is, and yet can rejoice in his spiritual privileges, the more holy he is: there goes a great deal of holiness to it, to join these two together: for a man to rejoice in his spiritual privileges and yet to be humble: and to walk very humbly. Some there are, that look upon their spiritual privileges, and rejoice much; but they do not walk humbly: some labour to walk humbly, and are much troubled in the consideration of their own evil; but they do not rejoice in their spiritual privileges. Give me a christian that doth both, and he is a blessed man. The study of this truth that is now before you, will teach you to do both, to do both together: for, what a great privilege is this, not a sigh, not a groan, not a duty, but the Lord Christ takes it, and carries it in, and presents it to God the Father for me, whereby I have acceptance? Considering this; here is matter of much joy and rejoicing. Aye but, it is Christ that does it; there is no such worthiness in mine own duty; it were lost, and cast away, if Jesus Christ did not take it in his hand, and carry it into the bosom of God the Father, and therefore, why should I not walk humbly.

I conclude all with this, if that the Lord Jesus Christ our great High Priest, offers up all our gifts unto God the Father, whereby we have acceptance: what infinite cause have we all to be thankful to God for Christ, and to love Jesus Christ for ever!

Suppose one of you had been among the disciples, when the Lord Christ washed his disciples' feet; and he should have come, and washed your feet, and have done it; would not your heart have glowed with love to Jesus Christ? Yet when the Lord Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet, it was in the days of his flesh, when he was here on the earth: but

now he is in glory, and yet for all this, he takes your dirty prayers, and does (as it were) wash the feet of your prayers, that he may present them to God the Father: he washes your tears over again in his blood, and presents them to God the Father: he takes all your duties, and perfumes them with his intercessions, and so presents them unto God the Father. Oh! what cause have we to love Jesus Christ! Oh! you that never loved Christ, love him now; and you that loved him before, love him much more: you that fear the Lord, love the Lord: and let us all, even go away with our hearts warmed with this love, blessing and praising the name of the Lord.

And thus I have led you into a third work of our great High Priest, which is this, to offer up the gifts of the people unto God the Father: A fourth follows, &c.

SERMON IV.

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to godliness, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 17, 18.

IT hath been opened and applied, that the work of the high priest, was, and is, to satisfy for the sins of the people; to make intercession for them; and to offer up their gifts unto God the Father; all which Christ doth for us.

I shall speak of one work more of our great High Priest, and that is, to bless the people. We read in the Old Testament, of two sorts of high priests: one according to the order of Aaron the Levitical high priest, as I may so speak, and his work was, for to bless the people; as we may read in the vith chapter of Numbers, and the 23rd verse: "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, on this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them," &c. There was another high priest; not according to this order of Aaron; and that was Melchisedec: and he also did bless Abraham. And the apostle speaking of him as a great type of, and in relation to Jesus Christ our great High Priest, in

the viith chapter of this book of the Hebrews, and the 6th verse, saith, that he blessed Abraham: "But he whose descent is not counted from them, received tythes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises." So then this blessing of the people, being the work of both the high priests; and both Aaron and Melchisedec being great types of Jesus Christ our High Priest; surely it must needs be one of the great works of our High Priest, for to bless the people.

For the opening and clearing up of this truth, I shall endeavour to discover:

First, What the blessing of Christ our High Priest is, wherein it consists, and what Christ doth, when he doth bless the people.

Secondly, That it belongs unto Jesus Christ especially, for to bless the people.

Thirdly, That our Lord and Saviour Christ, our great High Priest is exceeding willing for to bless poor sinners; and that this blessing of the people, is a work whereunto he is much inclined, and wherein he is much delighted.

Fourthly, That he doth this, and doth it fully.

Fifthly, According to our method: how all this doth conduce unto our comfort, and unto our holiness.

First, If ye ask me, what the blessing of Christ, and of the gospel is; and wherein it consists?

I answer first in the general, That the blessing of the gospel, and of Christ, consisteth in spiritual things especially, and not in temporal. And therefore saith the apostle in that ist of the Ephesians, and the 3rd verse: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us, with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ." The curse, and judgments of God, that do befal men now under the gospel, are not in outward afflictions, and bodily troubles so much; as in spiritual miseries, blindness of mind, and hardness of heart: and so also on the contrary, the blessing of the gospel, doth not consist so much in outward things, as in spiritual; "Who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings." Indeed, if we look into the Old Testament we shall find, that when Moses did bless the people, he blessed them much in temporal blessings. In the xxviiith of Deuteronomy, and the 2nd verse. "All these things shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken to the

voice of the Lord thy God." What blessings are those? "Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field: blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep: blessed shall be thy basket and thy store." Thus he goes on in outward blessings. But now if we look into the gospel, and consider the blessings of Jesus Christ, and lay them together with Moses, we shall find them to be spiritual blessings. In the vth of Matthew, and the 3rd verse &c. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: blessed are those that mourn for they shall be comforted." Indeed the promise of the earth comes in at the 5th verse; but he returns again to spiritual blessings: "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." Here are spiritual blessings; this is the stream of the gospel, it runs this way. When the Lord blesseth a man, he gives him that which is suitable to him. In the times of the gospel, men are more spiritual than they were in the times of the law; therefore gospel-blessings, they are spiritual blessings. Every thing gives, and communicates to another, according to what it hath itself: the sun communicates light unto the world, because it hath light itself: and man communicates the nature of man unto his child, because he hath the nature of man himself. So our Lord Christ, when he blesses, he communicates according unto what he hath himself; and his blessings especially consisting in spiritual things, so he doth bless. Indeed, as in the times of the Old Testament there were spiritual blessings, that were mixed with temporal, by virtue of the covenant that was made with Abraham: so now, outward blessings are thrown in as an overplus: but yet notwithstanding, though they be not spiritual in their nature, they are spiritual in their end, and so it is true to say that the blessing of the gospel, and of Christ is a spiritual blessing.

But more particularly, if ye ask me wherein this consisteth? I shall name but two things:

First, This blessing of the gospel, or of Christ, it consists in a supernatural, and spiritual enjoyment of God in Christ: the love and favour of God in Christ. When the priests

blessed in the times of the Old Testament, in that vith of Numbers they said, "The Lord cause his face for to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace: the Lord bless thee, and keep thee." Verses 24, 25, 26. Which the apostle Paul expounding, in the 2nd Cor. the xiiith chapter and the 14th verse, renders it thus: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." The Lord bless thee, the Lord cause his face to shine upon you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you: three times; the Lord, the Lord, the Lord; noting the Trinity; which the apostle here explains by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Seeing of God, is a blessing out of the mouth of Christ, a gospel blessing. And what is it for a man to see God? In the phrase of the Old Testament, the Hebrew, to see, is ordinarily used for to enjoy. In the ivth Psalm. "Who will shew us any good?" The word in the Hebrew is, Who will make us to see any good? that is to enjoy good. So then, to see God, it is to enjoy him. When Jacob enjoyed God, he saw him; and the place it was called, Peniel; for he had seen the Lord, and there the Lord blessed him. There is no seeing of God but in Christ. And therefore I say, that herein consists the blessing of the gospel, in a supernatural, and spiritual enjoyment of God in Christ, the favour and love of God in Christ.

Again, it consists also, in the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost in our hearts: the giving out of the Holy Ghost unto the hearts of men. And therefore it is added in that place of the Corinthians; "And the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." That must needs be the great blessing of the gospel, and so of Christ; that is the thing promised in the gospel. What is that? If we look into the ist chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and the 4th verse, it is said there of the disciples, "That they should wait for the promise of the Father." Christ commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. What is that? We know what it was, and is, that which befel afterward; it was the giving out of the Holy Ghost: the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and this

is called "*The* promise of the Father." That as in the times of the Old Testament, the promise was, the giving of the Son, and coming of the second person: so after Christ came, the great promise was, the coming of the third person, and the giving of the Holy Ghost. "When I am gone (saith Christ) I will send ye another Comforter. He that believeth, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This he spake concerning the Spirit, which was not yet given, in those extraordinary emanations of gifts and graces, because he was not yet glorified. So then, the great blessing that was to be given unto the children of men, the great gospel blessing, was the giving out of the Holy Ghost: this is a gospel blessing indeed.

Well, but what doth Christ do, when he doth bless?

It is observable, that when any superior did bless; a father did bless his child, or the like; he did observe what was the choice mercy, and good in those times, and he did wish that unto his child, or unto his inferior. And so in Isaac, and Jacob's time; the choice good was the dew of heaven: and when they did bless their children, they wished unto them the dew of heaven. So now, when our Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, doth bless any man; observing that the choice mercy of the gospel is the enjoyment of God in Christ, the favour and love of God, and the giving out of the Holy Ghost into a man's heart; he doth wish all this good unto him, and he says unto God the Father: Lord, let this poor soul have thy favour; Oh! cause thy face to shine upon this poor soul, and give out the Holy Ghost unto it that it may walk after the Spirit.

In the second place, it is observable, that when the priests did bless the people, they did not barely wish good unto them, but they did authoritatively pronounce them blessed. "They shall put my name upon them, saith the Lord, when they bless," Num. vi. 27. So when the Lord Christ, our great High Priest, doth bless a man, he does not barely wish him good, the Lord cause his face for to shine upon that soul in a way of wishing: but the Lord Christ being a High Priest when he blesseth, he doth authoritatively pronounce such a soul to be blessed.

Thirdly, When the priest blessed, he did not only pronounce the people blessed: but in the blessing of the priest

there was a kind of binding power; it had the power, force, and efficacy of an absolution. And, therefore, as Christ says unto his disciples, "Go, and whosoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted:" I will stand by you in it. So saith the Lord in that same place, the vith of Numbers, "On this wise shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee." And at the 27th verse, "They shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them." I will stand by them in this. So when the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest doth bless, he doth not only pronounce a man to be blessed, but he doth absolve him from all his sins: and, saith he, by authority that is given to me from my Father, the keys that are put into my hand, I do bind this blessing upon this poor soul.

Further, The priest when he blessed, indeed he could wish well, and he could pronounce a man blessed, and he might absolve, but he could go no further, he could not confer the blessing, he could not bestow the blessing: but our Lord Christ, being an High Priest beyond all the high priests that ever were before him in this respect too, where he doth bless, he bestoweth the blessing, being God and man, he bestoweth the blessing.

In the fifth place, This our great High Priest, being God and man; look how God blesseth, so doth he bless. In the Scripture ye shall find, that when God the Father blessed, he said unto those things that he blessed, Increase and multiply: still when he blessed, Increase and multiply. So the Lord Jesus Christ our High Priest, when he comes to bless, he doth not barely wish good unto a poor soul, or pronounce him blessed, or bestow a good thing upon him; but saith he, O soul, multiply in this good; the Lord increase thy graces, and thy gifts, and thy comforts; poor soul, increase and multiply herein. This the Lord Christ our great High Priest doth. Thus it is clear what the blessing of the gospel is, wherein it consists, and what our High Priest doth when he doth bless the people.

But, secondly, Does this blessing properly or specially belong unto Jesus Christ?

Yes, for he was made a curse for sin, he and none else made a curse for sin; and, therefore, it belongs unto him above all the world for to bless. For look what evil Jesus

Christ endured, the contrary good he merited for the children of men, a power to bestow that good. Now he above all was cursed, hung upon the cross, and died a cursed death, he was made a curse; therefore it belongs unto him above all for to give the blessing, for to bless poor sinners. *Primum in quolibet genere, &c.* The first in every kind is the cause of the rest. The sun is the cause of all the light we have here below, and it is the first light body. And the Lord Jesus Christ, he is the first blessing: therefore hath thy God blessed thee for ever. There are three that we read of in Scripture especially that did bless: the father, the king, and the priest: the father did bless his children, the king blessed his subjects, and the priest blessed the people. Now the Lord Jesus Christ he is our Father, "The everlasting Father:" he is our King, "I will set my King upon my holy hill:" and he is our great High Priest; and therefore all these relations meeting in him, it belongs unto him above all for to bless the people.

But, thirdly, is the Lord Jesus Christ willing for to bless poor sinners and inclined unto it?

Yes, he is very willing: this blessing of the people, it is a work whereunto he is much inclined, and wherein he is most delighted. Ye shall observe therefore, what abundance of blessings Christ scattered among the people when he was here upon the earth. Ye do not read that ever he cursed any man, formally cursed him. Once, indeed, he pronounced a curse, but it fell upon a barren fig-tree, not upon a man. But take your Bibles and turn over from leaf to leaf, and see how frequent he was in blessing; and consider whether you do read in all the Bible of any preacher or prophet that ever in the way of their preaching pronounced so many blessings as Christ did? He begins blessing, "Blessed are the poor;" and "Blessed are those that mourn;" and "Blessed are those that hunger and thirst;" and "Blessed are those that are persecuted for my name's sake. Blessed are those that hear the word of God and keep it. He took little children into his arms and blessed them." Do but mark in all the gospel, how frequent Christ was in blessing, never in cursing; more frequent in blessing, than ever any preacher was in all his sermons. What is the reason of this? Because this work of blessing the people is a work wherein the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, is much delighted, a work whereunto he is most inclined.

Well, fourthly, but doth he do it?

Yes, he doth do it, and doth it fully. The same place that I named will prove it, the 1st of the Ephesians, and the 3rd verse, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in* Christ. Not only meritoriously, but by the hand of Christ. And, saith he, he hath done it, with all spiritual blessings, and he hath done it by Jesus Christ.

You will say, We do not see that men are thus blessed by Christ; for where Christ blesseth, he doth not only wish well and good unto a man, but he bestoweth it; yea, he doth not only bestow good, but he doth increase and multiply: but upon this account, how few are there in the world that are blessed by Christ!

For answer, It is a hard thing, sometimes, unto a Christian for to discern this blessing of Christ. Ye can see the boughs, fruit, body, bark of a tree; but if ye will see the root, ye must dig and take pains for to see it: it is an easy thing to see the leaves, &c., but if you would see the root, ye must dig and take pains for it. This blessing of Jesus Christ it is the root of all; and if you will see this, you must dig and take pains to see it, it does not lie open to every one's view. The Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, does not bless as man blesses, and so his blessing is very much hidden from our eyes; he does not bless as we do, he does not bless as the world does: if the world sees a rich man, it pronounces him blessed: O! there is a blessed man, and there is a happy man! what an excellent dwelling hath he, how healthful! his table is spread, &c. The world blesses rich men, pronounces them happy and blessed. But our Lord Jesus Christ, he does as Jacob did when Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob to be blessed by him; he set Ephraim the younger at the left hand of Jacob, and he set Manasseh the elder at the right hand of Jacob, that Jacob might give the right hand blessing to the elder, and the left hand blessing to the younger: but when Joseph had set them thus before Jacob, Jacob crosses hands, and he turns the right hand blessing to the younger. So two men are brought before Christ, a rich man, it may be, and a poor man, and in the eye of the world, the rich man must carry the blessing: O! but our Lord Christ, he crosses hands, and he lays the blessing upon the younger brother

many times. And so in regard of ordinances: two sorts of ordinances are brought before Christ, God's ordinance and man's ordinance; and man's ordinance, in the eye of the world, is the elder brother, and God's ordinance the younger brother; and both these are brought before Christ for a blessing, and the ordinance of man is set at the right hand of Christ by the world; but the Lord Christ, he crosses hands, and he lays the blessing upon the younger brother in this respect. And so two men are brought before him, a proud pharisee and a poor broken-hearted sinner; the pharisee comes unto the right hand of Christ, and thinks for to carry the blessing; but the Lord Christ crosses hands, and lays the right hand blessing upon the poor broken-hearted sinner, and passes by the proud pharisee. The Lord Christ doth not bless as the world blesseth.

Again, as he doth not bless as the world blesseth, so he doth not bless always as professors bless. Professors, they do ordinarily bless men according unto their outward privileges, gospel and church privileges: O! says the woman unto Christ, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and blessed are the paps that gave thee suck." Christ crosses hands. Nay, but, says Christ, "Blessed are those that hear the word of God, and keep it, and do my commandments." You bless according to outward privileges; I do not go that way of blessing, says Christ: he does not bless as professors bless always.

Thirdly, He does not bless as godly men bless always; as gracious men bless, not always. For, you that are godly, you pronounce such a man blessed, as hath much grace, and hath assurance of the love of God in Christ; and one that hath strong and great parts, and able to carry away whole sermons word for word, and of strong memory and large gifts, that are head and shoulders above their fellows. But the Lord Jesus Christ does not always bless thus; "Blessed are the poor in spirit," says he. "Blessed are those that mourn." He does not say, Blessed are those that rejoice; or, Blessed are those that have the assurance of God's love; or, Blessed are those that are strong in grace: No, but dost thou know a poor weak christian, a mourning soul like a dove of the valleys, says the Lord, I bless him.

Thus I say, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest,

he does not bless as we bless, he does not bless as the world blesses, he does not bless always as professors bless, he does not bless always as godly men bless, and therefore no wonder that his blessing is hidden. Children when they are very young are often blessed by their parents, and they do not mind it or take notice of it; children of two or three years old: and so it is with many a gracious soul blessed by Jesus Christ, they do not take notice of their Father's blessing. But the Lord Christ doth always bless his people; only, there are several times special seasons that he gives out his blessing: let me tell ye of those times a little, that so ye may come for his blessing while his hand is in as it were; so that you may be crowned with spiritual blessings in and from Jesus Christ.

First, When Christ our High Priest doth see that a man is weak in grace or weak in gifts, and hath some work or service for him to do, some employment to call him forth unto; then the Lord Christ doth bless him. There are two times especially, as I remember, that the Lord speaks those words concerning man, "Increase and multiply." Once in the beginning, when he had made man and woman; and once in the ixth of Genesis, when he had brought Noah out of the ark. Why does he rather choose for to speak those words, Increase and multiply, at these two times especially, rather than at any other time? In the beginning there was but a little stock of mankind, and the Lord had a design upon man to make use of him in the world, and therefore in the beginning, says he, Increase and multiply: but afterward that the flood had swept away man, Noah and his family being preserved, when he came out of the ark, the Lord having yet a further design upon man to use him, he reneweth those words again, Increase and multiply. So when the Lord Christ sees that a man's heart is upright and sincere with him, and he hath some work and service for him to do, then the Lord comes forth and blesses him: O soul, increase and multiply, increase in thy gifts and graces, and multiply. That is one.

Again, As the Lord doth bless weak gifts and graces when he intends to use them; so also when as he hath made use of a man, when a man hath done the work of God, and done it to purpose, then the Lord blesses that man. Melchisedec, a great type of Christ, here when Abraham had been upon a great service, slaying kings, and rescued Lot, then Melchi-

sedec the high priest comes forth and blesses him. So when the Lord Jesus Christ our great High Priest, sees that a poor soul hath been upon his work, upon his service, and hath done his work faithfully, then he comes forth and blesses that soul: O soul, live for ever.

Again, As he does bless at this time, when a man hath done his work; so also when a man is willing for to leave all his relations and natural engagements for to follow him to cleave close unto him, and to his ways, and ordinances. The Lord blessed Abraham, "Thou shalt be blessed; in blessing I will bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed." Upon what occasion? "Abraham," says he, "get thee out of thy country, and go to a land and place that I will shew thee." And Abraham did so, Abraham pulled up his tent, and went after the Lord, and left his own relations; and thereupon the Lord fell upon him and blessed him. So when the Lord Christ our High Priest sees a soul willing even to trample upon his relations for to follow him, willing to leave all natural engagements for to be his servant; then the Lord Christ comes out, and says he, This soul do I bless: In blessing I will bless thee, and I will bless thee exceedingly. That is a third time.

Fourthly, The Lord Christ, our High Priest, does bless when the world curses, a special time of Christ's blessing is when the world curses. When Rabshekah reviled, blasphemed, and cursed, then God blessed. When Balak hired Balaam for to curse the people of Israel, then the Lord blessed them by the mouth of Balaam himself. And ye see what Christ says to this purpose in that same vth chapter of Matthew, at the 10th verse, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." But when are they blessed? "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you." Aye but, suppose it does not come to a bodily persecution, men may not be thrown in prison, or brought to the stake. Says he, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile," persecute you with the tongue, "and say all manner of evil against you for my sake." When the world says of such a poor soul, that he is an hypocrite, a dissembler; and speaks all manner of evil that can be devised against a poor soul for the name of

Christ, that is the very time, that Christ comes for to bless that soul, then doth Christ bless; it is a blessed season.

In the fifth place, The Lord Christ does also bless, when his people do graciously enjoy the ordinances purely and evangelically administered. It is said concerning Zion, there commanded he his blessing for ever, "Blessed are the people that hear the joyful sound; they shall walk in the light of his countenance," Ps. lxxxix. 15. It is written of the priests in the times of the old testament, that when the people, the congregation were come together, they blessed them; when the people were come together for the enjoyment of ordinances according to God's own appointment, then the priests blessed them. And did their high priest bless them then? and shall not our High Priest do it now? Did their high priest bless them when they sat under Mosaical ordinances? and shall not our High Priest bless the people that sit under evangelical and gospel ordinances, purely and evangelically administered? The people then might make account of the greatest blessing; and so you may do also of the blessing of Jesus Christ when thus you do enjoy ordinances. Only there is this difference: (other differences there are, but this only I shall speak of:) Then the priest did bless the people when the congregation was dismissed; but now, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, he is blessing of the congregation all the while; he is going up and down in the congregation all the while that the word is preached and ordinances administered, and he is blessing poor souls as they sit longing after him, and sighing towards him; he is blessing of them all the while. Thus he does bless, and though you do not always perceive it, yet he doth bless his people. And that is the fourth thing.

But yet you will say, fifthly, How does all this conduce unto our comfort and unto our holiness?

Much every way.

First for comfort, beloved, Is it not a comfortable thing to be blessed by Jesus Christ? Children counted it a great matter to be blessed by their parents. When as Jacob had gotten the blessing from Esau; Esau goes and sits down and mourns, he could not be comforted because the blessing was gone: and Jacob, though he were thrust out of doors, yet because he had gotten the blessing, he went away cheerful;

and it was but an Isaac's blessing. But behold a greater than Isaac is here! Oh! was it such a matter to have an Isaac's blessing? what is it then to be blessed by Jesus Christ? Beloved! when as Christ doth bless, he turns all our curses into blessings, and our miseries into mercies. When God curses, he turns our table into a snare: and when Christ blesseth, he turns our snare into a table, quite contrary. Jacob pronounced a curse upon his two sons, Simeon and Levi (you know upon what occasion) they should be divided and scattered in Israel: afterward the tribe of Levi stands up at the commandment of God to execute justice and judgment, and the Lord blessed them: and how did he bless them? they were to be the preachers unto all the tribes; and so that they might be preachers unto all the tribes, they were to be scattered into all the tribes, and so Jacob's curse was turned into a blessing to them.

Is it not a comfortable thing, for a man to have all his cursers, to be blessers? It is a comfortable thing, for all a man's curses to become blessings: but now I say, it is a comfortable thing, for all a man's cursers, to be blessers to him. When the Lord Christ blesses, he will make men's cursers whether they will or no, (in the day of their visitation at least) for to bless. Ye know that Balaam would have cursed Israel, but the Lord had blessed them. Balaam got upon a high mountain, and from thence he would have cursed Israel, but it would not be. Then he gets upon another high mountain, and from thence he would have cursed Israel, but it would not be. Then he gets upon another high mountain: thinking that would have done it, and from thence he would have cursed Israel, but that would not do it. Oh! says he, "The Lord hath seen no iniquity in Israel," and therefore he blesses them: the curse is turned into a blessing; so there are many that deal thus by the people of God in these days: they get upon such an high mountain, such a great and high means, and they think to curse the people of God from thence, but it will not be. Then they get upon another mountain, another means, thinking from thence to curse the people of God, but it will not be. Then they get upon another high mountain or hill, and think then to curse the people of God, and do them mischief, but it will not do it. Why? for the Lord Christ sees no iniquity, the Lord Christ hath blessed them:

and so at last, in the day of wicked men's visitation, they are forced to say, These are the people of God, and these are blessed and shall be blessed. We know what is said in the Scripture, "The blessing of the Lord maketh rich: and he addeth no sorrow therewithal." Is it not a good thing then to be blessed by Christ? If a man be blessed by Jesus Christ he may bless himself in the Lord, and he may comfort himself in every condition, and he may say thus, Well, though I be a poor man, yet I am blessed by Christ: and though my estate be sunk, and decayed, yet I am blessed by Christ: and though I be reproached, and hated by men, yet I am blessed by Jesus Christ; a man may comfort himself in every condition.

But you will say, indeed if a man be assured that Christ hath blessed him, he may do thus; but I am afraid that Christ hath not blessed me, or that he is not willing to bless me: if I could be assured that this great High Priest, had once laid his hand, his blessing-hand upon me, I should have comfort in all conditions.

Give me leave to lay two or three things before you concerning this.

First, When the Lord blessed Abraham, he said unto him, "In thee and thy seed shall all nations be blessed. It is a sign unto Abraham, that he was blessed, because others were blessed by him. So now, when a man's parts, gifts, graces, and comforts are blessings to others, it is an argument that that man is blessed himself.

Further, when a man is blessed by God, or Christ; he is drawn nearer to God by all outward things, by all things; "Come ye blessed, go ye cursed." Blessing hath an attractive nature, "Come ye blessed:" when the Lord Christ does bless a man, he does draw him, "Come ye blessed." When a man is brought nearer to God by affliction, he is blessed: when a man is brought nearer to God by his estate, by any comfort, by any sorrow, here is blessing, "Come ye blessed." Blessings draw one nearer to God with a cord of love.

Thirdly where the Lord does bless, he does cause a man to increase and multiply, in that thing wherein he is blessed. Increasing and multiplying, is so natural unto blessing, that in the original tongues of the Old and New Testament,

plenty is put for blessing. I will give you but one clear place for it in the New Testament, the 2 Corinthians ixth chapter, 5th verse. "Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto ye, and make up before-hand your bounty." The word is your blessing. Whereof you had notice before; that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty. The word is, a matter of blessing. But especially in the next verse. But this I say, "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully." And he which soweth with blessing (as it is in the original) shall reap with blessing: and here it is opposed to sparingly, and translated bountifully. Where the Lord does bless, he does always cause a man to increase and multiply.

Now, beloved in the Lord, I appeal unto all your souls, you that make this objection, that are afraid the Lord Christ hath not blessed you as your High Priest, hath not laid his hand upon you, and blessed you: yet do not ye know more of Christ than ye have known before? hath not the hidden truths of the gospel been increased and multiplied upon your hearts? hath not your hearts been brought nearer to God by affliction? hath not your souls been drawn nearer to God by his outward dealings with you? And as Abraham was therefore blessed, because he was made a blessing to others: so I appeal to ye, have not your parts, gifts, and graces, in some measure been blessings unto others, even unto your poor family, and unto others also? Then be of good comfort (man or woman) wherever thou standest, the Lord Christ hath blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed, hold up thy head poor blessed soul, the Lord Jesus hath blessed thee: when the Lord did lay this blessing upon thee, I cannot tell thee, but I find thee a blessed man, stay thyself upon the Lord, cheer up thy drooping heart, thou art a blessed soul.

But you will say, How does this make unto our holiness? I confess this is a very comfortable cordial, that the Lord Jesus Christ is in office to bless poor sinners; but how does this conduce unto our holiness?

Very much: this holds forth great encouragement, unto all poor sinners for to come to Christ, and to come without delay. Why? once come to Christ and blessed; but without

Christ and cursed: an enemy to Jesus Christ and a cursed man: cursed in thy store-house: cursed in thy basket; and cursed in all things that thou puttest thine hand unto. Oh! then, will you not come to Christ that you may be blessed: that day that a poor soul comes unto Christ, whatever he hath been he is blessed: that day may be called Gilgal, for then the curse is rolled away from him. "Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is pardoned." The first day, the first minute, that he comes to Christ, his sin is pardoned, and he is blessed. Who would not then come unto Christ presently, that he may be blessed for ever? When as Esau had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, the Lord looked upon him as a profane man, and he stands upon record in Scripture for a profane man unto this day, because he sold his birthright. And says the text, Though he sought the blessing (it was a blessing) with tears, he never recovered it. The Lord Jesus Christ, he is now among us, and offering to bless us; and if I will rather keep my sins than come unto Jesus Christ, the Lord will look upon me as a profane man; and I may go and seek the blessing with tears, and never recover it again. Oh! here is that, methinks, that should make every wicked man; if there be ever a drunkard, swearer, or unclean wanton that reads this book, mind what is said for your everlasting peace: I say, here is that, methinks, that should make every wicked man, to look upon the godly, as David did upon the sparrows, and upon the swallows: says David, "These birds full nigh thine altar, may have place to sit and sing:" as ye have it in your singing psalms. These birds can come and make their nests; but as for me I am kept at a distance: he was provoked by the sparrows and swallows making their nests near the altar. So may a wicked man say, There is a godly man indeed, he may go to Jesus Christ he may go to prayer, and he may offer up his gift to God the Father by the hands of Christ, he can come near to God by Christ: but as for me, I am yet without Christ, I am not yet gone to Jesus Christ; I am such a cursed swearer, I am such a profane drunkard, I am such a vile, wretched wanton, such a notorious, scandalous sinner! Oh! these people are blessed, but I am cursed, but now through the Lord's grace I will go unto the Lord Christ that I may be blessed.

Yea, my beloved, here is, methinks, a strong invitation, unto all those that are young people for to come unto Jesus Christ: even those that are very young. Hear the word of the Lord, ye children. The Lord Jesus Christ received children into his arms and he blessed them. You that are nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, or fifteen years old; you can be solicitous for your father's blessing, and have gone down upon your knees often unto your father, and you have said, Pray father, pray to God to bless me. Oh! will ye go to your outward father for his blessing? and will ye not go unto Jesus Christ? He is an everlasting Father, this your earthly father will be dead ere long; he is an everlasting Father, children, and he is able to bless ye, and willing to bless ye. Have ye gone down upon your knees to your outward father? Oh! children, down, down upon your knees before the Lord Jesus Christ, and go to him for his blessing. Some of you, it may be, never went yet to Christ for his blessing; ye have lived so many years, ten, eleven or twelve years, and never went to Christ as High Priest, for his blessing all this while. Oh! what a mighty encouragement is here unto all men to come to Christ, that they may be blessed by him.

But yet further, As there is an encouragement for to come unto Christ: so this argument does also encourage us to go on in the good ways of Christ, notwithstanding all opposition that we meet withal: I say, it does speak encouragement to go on in the face of all opposition. For when Abraham had been at battle, then came Melchisedec the high priest to bless him: and when a poor soul goes out to battle for Christ, then comes our great Melchisedec, our High Priest, and blesses that soul. The time of opposition, it is the time of Christ's blessing. Therefore, why should I be discouraged, or beaten out of the way of Christ, by reason of any opposition, though it be never so great? Times of opposition are Christ's blessing time.

Again, This argument does not only speak encouragement against all opposition: but it does also encourage us to go on in the good ways of God when we are called unto it, though we have but little strength and weak parts. Though there be but little oil in the cruse, though there be but little meal in the barrel, if Christ call to the work, he will bless a

man in it: and when Christ blesses, he does multiply and increase a man's parts in the using of them. As when he commanded them to sit down and eat, he did multiply and increase the bread in their eating: so now, does Christ call me to any work or service? well then, though I am weak, though I have not oil enough, though I have not meal enough, though I have not strength enough; yet the Lord Christ will bless, and when he blesses, he does increase and multiply: and therefore, why should not I go on upon his work, if he do call me thereunto, though I have never so little strength.

And yet further, If all this be true: why should not a man be contented with his condition, though he be never so mean? Beloved in the Lord! is there not enough in Christ's blessing? Truly, he is too covetous, whom the blessing of Christ will not satisfy. Well, whatever my condition be, yet I may be blessed by Jesus Christ; and hath the Lord blessed me? then will I be contented with my condition, though it be never so mean, I have all, as Jacob once said, I have all.

Yea, in the fifth and last place: Here is that, which if well studied and considered; will provoke us all for to bless the Lord, and continually to bless the Lord! What is the life of a Christian here, but continual blessing of God? it is heaven begun: and in heaven, they do nothing else but bless and praise the Lord; and I say our life here is heaven begun and therefore a christian should be always blessing and praising the Lord.

Well, But what will make a man to be always blessing, and praising of God in Christ?

The knowledge that a man is blessed by Christ, will make a man bless God for Christ. And therefore consider how the apostle reasons, in the ist of Ephesians, and the 3rd verse, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:" Why? "who hath blessed *us*." When once a man can come to this, for to say, That the Lord Christ hath blessed him; then he will break forth into blessing and praising of the Lord; O! Blessed be the Lord: bless the Lord, O my soul; and bless the Lord all that is within me: for the Lord hath blessed me with spiritual blessings. Do you therefore desire to be always in this work of blessing the Lord? think much of this.

To conclude all; give me leave to call upon you to remem-

ber what ye have read. Ye have read, That it is the work of our great High Priest, to satisfy for the sins of the people: to answer unto all accusations that are brought against them: to offer up all our prayers and gifts unto God the Father: and to bless poor souls. Now then, beloved, according to all your wants, and according to all your temptations: I do beseech you in the Lord, go to Jesus Christ, unto this High Priest; try and see if you do not find it true, that the Lord does make good all this unto you. In case that you be under any spiritual want or temptation; put your souls under this disjunction: Come, O my soul, either the Lord Jesus Christ is our great High Priest, or else he is not: if he be not, what means this and that Scripture? And if the Lord Jesus Christ be our great High Priest; then surely he being faithful, will do all the work of the high priest for my soul. Indeed I have sinned, and sinned greatly; but O Lord, it is the work of our High Priest to satisfy: now, Lord Jesus, I come to thee as mine High Priest, O! satisfy for me. Indeed, I confess, mine own conscience does accuse me, Satan does accuse me, Moses does accuse me: but it is the work of our great High Priest, to take off all accusations brought against poor believers: now Lord, I do come unto thee, as to my great High Priest, Oh! take off this accusation that any poor soul does labour under. Indeed, when I look upon mine own duties; there is so much deadness, so much hardness of heart, and so many distractions that do accompany them, that I am afraid they will never be accepted: but, O Lord, it is the work of our great High Priest, to take away the weeds of the duty, and to present the duty; now, O Lord, I come unto thee as mine High Priest, Oh! carry my prayers into the bosom of God the Father. Yea, when I look upon my former life, Lord, I cannot but conclude myself, a poor cursed sinner: but yet notwithstanding, it is the work of our great High Priest, for to bless the people: O Lord, I do therefore now come unto thee as mine High Priest, Oh! bless me, and say unto all my graces, Increase and multiply.

SATAN'S POWER TO TEMPT,

AND

CHRIST'S LOVE TO AND CARE OF HIS PEOPLE UNDER TEMPTATION.

IN

FIVE SERMONS,

PREACHED AT ST. MARGARET'S, NEW FISH STREET, A. D. 1646.

ON TEMPTATION.

SERMON I.

"*For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*"—HEB. II. 18.

THE scope and drift of this epistle, is to raise and strengthen the faith of the Hebrews, and so the faith of those that are weak in grace. Our apostle Paul, therefore, whom I take to be the penman, labours to discover the transcendant excellency of Jesus Christ, with his love and good-will to the children of men. And because his excellencies were either such as relate his person, or such as relate his offices, of King, Priest, and Prophet; he tells us, in the ist chapter, that for the personal excellencies of Jesus Christ, "He is the Son of God, heir of all things, by whom were the worlds made: being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," in the 2nd and 3rd verses of that chapter. "That he is far above the angels," at the 4th verse. That he is God himself, at the 6th verse. And as for those excellencies that relate his offices, he tells us at the 1st verse, that he is the Prophet of prophets. That he is the great King, at the 8th verse. That he is an High Priest, in the iind chapter and the 17th verse. And therefore who would not trust unto him, and take heed unto such things as he shall speak unto them. And as for the love and good-will that he bears unto the children of men, the apostle speaks it out in all this iind chapter.

The greater condescension in the person loving to the person loved, the greater is the love. Now though Jesus Christ be heir of all things, and had all things put under his feet; far above all angels; yet notwithstanding, at the 7th verse, "He is made a little lower than the angels, takes our nature upon him," &c.

The more profitable any love is to the person loved, the greater is the love. Such is the love of Christ, for his love

is such, that "by him many sons are brought to glory," at the 10th verse. "Sanctified while they live," at the 11th verse. Satan, their deadly enemy, subdued for them, at the 14th and 15th verses.

The more distinguishing any love is, the greater is that love. Now Jesus Christ, as the great load-stone, passes by the golden metal of angels, and draws unto himself the iron metal of mankind: at the 16th verse: "For verily, he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham."

Again, the more the person loving does suffer for the person loved, the more and the greater is the love. Christ suffered death, and he was while he lived subject to our infirmities, and unto our temptations. "He was in all things made like unto us," at the 17th verse. "And he was tempted as we are tempted, that he might succour those that are tempted," at the 18th verse.

And would you have an account or a reason of all this? It is that he might show mercy unto the children of men: verse the 17th: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." If he were not made like unto us, in regard of our infirmities, he could not so experimentally pity us under our infirmities. If he were not tempted like unto us, he could not so *feelingly* succour us under our temptation; and so he had not been so fit to have been our High Priest: but our High Priest he is gone into the holy of holiest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto us, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest: "for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

I will not hold you longer in the coherence, or division of the words, or further explication: I shall open the words, God willing, more particularly and distinctly, as I shall come to the observations that shall be raised from them. And I begin with the last, being made the reason of the former. "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Tempted twice: he tempted, and they tempted.

This word *tempted*, or *tempt*, it is given in Scripture phrase sometimes to God, sometimes to man, and sometimes to the devil; and accordingly it is used three ways. Sometimes it is used for to prove; and so God is said for to tempt, in the xiiith of Deuteronomy. Sometimes it is used for to try, to make experiment of a thing, or a person, whom or which we did not know before; and so it is given to man, as I take it, in the vith of Judges. Sometimes it is used for a solicitation, and drawing unto what is evil; and so it is given unto the devil, in the ivth of Matthew, Christ "was led into the wilderness to be tempted." If ye look into the Scripture, ye do not find in all the Old Testament, that the word temptation is given to Satan, that Satan was said to tempt any: Satan did frequently tempt, we read in the Old Testament; but, I say, the word tempt is not given unto him. Satan tempted Job, but Job's afflictions in the Old Testament are not called Satan's temptations. As our Lord and Saviour Christ in the Old Testament was vailed, the Old Testament was full of Christ, yet Christ was hidden there: so was Satan and his temptations masked. Now when the light of the glorious gospel shined more clearly in the coming of Jesus Christ, as Christ's vail was taken off, so Satan's mask was taken off. Satan's temptations are no longer called afflictions, but bare temptations, throughout the New Testament. Indeed, this word temptation, in the phrase of the New Testament, is used sometimes for affliction, sometimes for Satan's suggestions, sometimes for our own sins. Temptation used for our afflictions: in the ist of James, 2nd verse, "Rejoice when ye fall into divers temptations;" that is, afflictions. Sometimes for the devil's suggestions—solicitations to evil: so in the ivth of Matthew, Christ is "led into the wilderness to be tempted." Sometimes for our own sins: Galatians the vith chapter and the 1st verse, "If any man be overtaken with an infirmity, you that are spiritual, restore him, considering that you also may be tempted." Now though our Saviour Christ is said to be tempted, in the two first respects, and not in the third; yet when it is said here in the text, "He himself hath suffered being tempted;" I take it to be meant in the second way, not the first, for otherwise there would be an identity thus: He himself hath suffered, having suffered: that would be the

sense of it else. And though we ourselves are said to be tempted in all three respects; in regard of afflictions, Satan's suggestions, and our own corruptions and sins; yet when it is said in the latter end of the verse, "He is able to succour them that are tempted;" I take it to be meant especially in the two last respects, and not in the first: for it hath relation unto that which goes before, the last verse being a reason of the latter end of the 17th verse: "To make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Hence the observation that I shall present unto you is only this.—

That God doth suffer his own servants, and dearest children, to be sorely tempted; yea, even to suffer by the hand of the temptation.

Our Lord and Saviour Christ, the Son of God, the only beloved Son of God, yet, saith the text, "He himself hath suffered being tempted:" not only tempted, but suffered being tempted. And it is said of his brethren, (for so his people are called in the beginning of the 17th verse,) that they are tempted. "He is able to succour them that are tempted." Succouring pre-supposeth suffering.

For the opening and clearing of this truth, I shall deliver myself these three ways.

First, That there is a suffering, afflictive dispensation in every temptation, though it does not prevail.

Secondly, That the saints and people of God do thus suffer, and why?

Thirdly, Answer to an objection; and so come to the application.

First, There is a vexing, corroding, afflictive disposition in every temptation, when it takes least, though it do not prevail. These granadoes, fire-balls, fire-darts of Satan, have a danger with them; though they do not burn down our spiritual building to the ground, they are afflictive, there is somewhat of a suffering with them. Paul calls his buffetings, a thorn, or a prick in the flesh: a buffeting and therefore afflictive: a thorn, or a prick in the flesh, and therefore afflictive. Notable is that expression which our Saviour Christ useth in the xxiind of Luke, at the 31st verse, to Peter. "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you

that he may sift you as wheat," There is never a word here. but carries a suffering with it. It is some affliction, to have so great an adversary as an angel is, who is great in power; the devil is called an angel, and he is called Satan, that is an adversary. Satan hath desired: the word that is used there, desired, it is not used again in the New Testament, as I remember. But in other authors that use it, it signifies such a desiring, as when one man does challenge another into the field to a duel: or such a desiring as when a man comes and calls for open, and public punishment upon a man: and all this is suffering and afflictive. Or, as your translation hath it: Satan hath desired to have you; he does not say thus: Satan hath desired to sift you; but Satan hath desired to have you. Is it not an affliction to a child, to hear a beggar stand craving and begging of his father to have him away, to carry him away from his house? there is never a temptation, but in that temptation Satan desires to have you, you that are the children of God, Satan desires to have you. Then again, "He hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." Now though in sifting there is a separation between the chaff and the wheat, yet it is not without a concussion, and a shaking of the wheat: the wheat and the grain is shaken, though the chaff be blown aside, and laid on heaps. And though through the skill of the sifter, the wheat may be so kept, as it does not fall into the chaff-heap; yet notwithstanding there is some danger in sifting, that the grain should fall over into the heap of chaff, and be burnt with the chaff: so here. Especially where Satan, the great destroyer of mankind, hath the fan in his hand: saith Christ, "Satan hath desired to have you," and hath desired to have you, "that he may *sift* you as wheat;" and I tell you there is so much danger in it, that nothing but my prayer can secure you, "But I have prayed for you." So that you see, there is something of a suffering in a temptation. You know it was a law in the Old Testament, that if a woman were abroad in the fields, and there met her some that offered violence to her; if she cried out, and did not consent, she was not guilty: but now, though she were not guilty, but innocent, if she were abused, it would be a continual affliction to a modest good woman. So it is here, Satan comes to meet us, and though we do not consent to him, yet a gracious heart cannot but look upon it

as an affliction, to be thus followed, and hunted with a temptation. And the Holy Ghost alluded to this practice, when he saith here in the text, Jesus Christ is able to succour: the word succour, ρηθησαι, signifies such a succouring as brings in help unto those that cry out; to come in, and run in with help upon one's crying out. In the xiith of the Revelations, it is said, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth; for the devil is come down with great wrath, for he knows that his time is short." There is a woe in it, where the devil comes down with great wrath. Now he looks upon all the saints, as having their time but short, and he comes down upon them in great wrath with his temptations: and there is a woe in it, although the temptation takes not: and for aught I know, upon this account, the New Testament may so promiscuously use the word temptation, both for affliction, and Satan's suggestions, even because seldom any affliction comes, but it does bring temptation with it: never any temptation but brings affliction: always something of a suffering in every temptation, even at that very time when it does least prevail. This is the first thing.

Secondly, Doth God suffer his own children thus to suffer?

Yes, And many times the best, most tempted; the best men meet with the worst temptations; those that are most eminently godly, are most foully assaulted. David, Job, Peter, Paul, and Christ himself was. Yea, God doth not only suffer Satan to come, and present evil objects before his servants, but suffers him to go so far, as to solicit, to press, to follow on his temptation. And therefore it is said concerning David, "That Satan stood up, and provoked him to number the people." He did not only present an evil object to him, but he followed his temptation, he solicited, he stood up and provoked David to number the people.

Yea, God doth not only suffer this: but at that very time, when the saints have had most of God, then they have suffered by the hand of temptation. When Paul had been taken up into the third heaven, then a messenger, Satan, was sent to buffet him: And when Jesus Christ had heard the voice, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" Then, (says the text in the ivth of Matthew 1,)" was he led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." And so with the saints now: when they have been, as it

were, in the third heaven with God, when they have had most of him, when they have heard the Lord saying, This is my beloved child; after special manifestations of his love, then most tempted: Oh! who would be secure, after manifestations of God's love?

Further, God doth not only suffer it thus far: but sometimes he suffers his children to be so far tempted, as they seem to have the worser, Satan the better; Satan taking the wall of them, the upper hand. In the iiird of Zechariah, it is said concerning Joshua: "That Satan stood at his right hand:" Satan took the wall of him, took the upper hand of him.

Lastly, God suffers this to be, and to continue a long time with some of his children. Paul saith, he had prayed thrice: that is, often; and all the answer he could get was this, "My grace is sufficient for thee," Paul; I do not say, I will deliver thee, but thou shalt have grace enough to uphold thee: my grace shall be sufficient. Thus God suffers his own dear children to suffer under the hand of temptation.

And would you know the reason? Good authors say, That God suffers his own dear children to be tempted, that they may be more enlightened. Temptation enlightens the tempted; thereby they are more experienced, and so more enlightened: God is pleased to answer them by this secret of thunder.

God suffers his children thus to be tempted, that they may be cleansed. This is God's usual way, he does wash us from our own filth, by the dung and excrement of these unclean spirits, and scours off the rust from his chosen vessels by the messengers of Satan: these are God's scullions to make his golden pots of the sanctuary the brighter.

God suffers his own children to be tempted, that they may be conserved or kept: he preserves them from one sin, by being tempted to another. And Paul says, That he received that messenger of Satan twice, that he might not be exalted.

God suffers his children to be tempted, that their graces may be increased. As the fire is blown up by the wind of the bellows; and the strength of an argument draws out the strength of the answerer: so does these temptations draw out the strength of the tempted.

God suffers his children to be tempted, that they may be

discovered to themselves and others, what their sins and graces are. You do not know what the liquor is, until the vessel be bored, then you know it. And the word that is here used for temptation, πειρασμο, originally signifies to bore, as a vessel is bored. The love of a woman is never more known, than when her husband is from home, and she is solicited to folly, then her love is tried to her husband.

God suffers his children to be tempted, that occasionally they may be made more fit to receive the fulness of Christ as a Saviour. A man not tempted may receive the fulness of Christ as the head: but unless a man be tempted, not fit to receive the fulness of Christ as a Saviour.

Hereby they are made like unto Jesus Christ. Christ was made like to us, that he might be tempted; and we are tempted that we may be made like to him. He was made like to us, that he might be tempted, and so become our High Priest: and we are tempted, that we may be made like to him, and receive of the mercy of that office. He was made like to us and tempted, that he might have communion with us in the evil of our temptation: and we are made like to him and tempted as he was, that we might have communion with him in the benefit of his temptations. For these and other reasons, God suffers his children to be tempted. But my design is not to fall upon the argument of temptation at large; only to speak of the suffering part of it: "For in that he suffered being once tempted, he is able to succour those that are tempted."

And upon the same reason or account, that God suffered the children of Israel to be vexed, and to suffer by the hands of the Egyptians, he doth suffer his own dear children to be stung and vexed by these temptations. Give me leave a little in that.

God suffered the Israelites to be vexed, and to suffer much by the hands of the Egyptians, that so he might make his glorious power the more to appear for them and in them. For when men saw that the Israelites increased and prospered, the more they were oppressed, and the more the Egyptians laboured to cut them off: then who would not say, oh! what power and what mercy is here? So now, when as men shall see, that the graces of the saints increase by temptation, and by spiritual oppression; who would not say, oh! what mercy and what power is here?

God suffered the Israelites to be vexed by the Egyptians that the Israelites might not learn their manners, and their superstitions. They were very apt to drink in their manners, to imitate, to follow them. Notwithstanding all the ill usage that the Israelites had at the hand of the Egyptians, they were very apt to learn their manners: had they had better usage, how would they have drunk them in much more then? Beloved! God would not have us to learn the manners of Satan, we are apt to drink them in too much notwithstanding all the hard dealing that we have from our temptations that do come from Satan: had we better entertainment, how should our souls mingle and incorporate with those temptations.

God suffered the Israelites to be vexed by the Egyptians, that so they might be provoked against them, to cut them off, and destroy them utterly. We never cut off an enemy, and destroy him utterly until we be provoked; and we are provoked by the ill usage we have at their hands. God would have Satan destroyed: for this cause was Christ manifested in the flesh, that he might destroy the works of Satan; and what Christ did for us, he doth work in us: and we will not destroy him till we be provoked; and therefore God is pleased to let us have such hard dealing, and suffering work from the hand of temptation, that we may be the more provoked against him.

God suffered the Israelites to be vexed by the Egyptians, that so they might long for Canaan the land of rest. And why doth God suffer his people to suffer thus by their temptations, but that they might cry out for help, and for the land of rest? as David, "Oh that I had wings like a dove for then would I fly away and be at rest."

If the children of Israel had not suffered thus from the hands of the Egyptians; in all likelihood they would have returned to Egypt much more than they did. They made them a captain to return again, notwithstanding all the hardness that they underwent in Egypt: but had the children of Israel had good usage in Egypt, how would they have returned again thither; beloved! we are apt to return again to folly; you that are the servants of God, too apt to return to folly, notwithstanding all the hard usage that you have from the hand of your temptation, how apt and ready are you to return to folly; now God loves you, and would not

have you to return again; and therefore that you might not return to your garlic, onions, and flesh-pots again, he suffers this spiritual Pharaoh thus to follow you, and lie hard upon you in these temptations. And thus you see what a glorious design of love God hath, even in the suffering part of his children's temptations: God's own children do suffer thus by the hand of a temptation.

But you will say, in the third place, (to answer the objection) If God's own people, his dearest children, be sorely tempted, yea, suffer under the hand of a temptation: how is that true, which you have in the 1 Epistle of John, the vth chapter, and the 18th verse: "Whosoever is born of God sins not: he that is begotten of God, keeps himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not;" the devil toucheth him not: and if the devil does not so much as touch him, how can this be true, that he suffers thus by the hand of his temptation.

For answer hereunto, ye must know that this word touching, in Scripture phrase, besides the literal sense, sometimes notes an hurting, or harming of one. So in the cvth Psalm, and the 15th verse. "Touch not mine anointed." Which is explained in the following words, "and do my prophets no harm." We read of Christ's touching, and the devil's touching. Christ touching those that were sick, and he cured them with his touch, it was an healing, curing touch, the touch of Christ. And we read of the devil's touching: so he speaks unto God that he would touch Job; that is, that he would break him, and break all his estate; Christ's touch is an healing touch, a curing touch; but Satan's touch is a destroying touch, a breaking touch. Now though God suffers his own children to be tempted, yea, and to suffer by the hand of a temptation, yet notwithstanding, the evil one touches him not, so as to harm him, to hurt him; but in the conclusion, so as to heal and to cure him, which is no touching.

Again, this same word touching, in Scripture phrase, sometimes notes fellowship and communion; and so when the apostle forbids the Corinthians fellowship, and communion with idolaters; saith he "Be ye separate, and touch no unclean thing." Touching there noting communion and fellowship with them in their worship: do not in the

least measure have any communion with them. So now although it pleases God, to suffer Satan thus to vex his children with temptation, yet notwithstanding, they have not fellowship or communion with him. Satan knocks at their door, but they do not frequently, and ordinarily open and let him in, so as to sup with them: Christ stands at their door and knocks, and they open and he comes in and sups with them, and they with him: they have fellowship with the Father, and they have fellowship with Jesus Christ, but they have not fellowship with the devil; they do not delight in him, they do not converse with him, they have not this fellowship with him: and therefore though they meet with temptation, yea, and though they suffer under temptation, yet in this respect the evil one touches them not, but suffer they do. And so I have cleared the point: God suffers his own dear children to be sorely tempted, yea, and to suffer under the hand of temptation.

I come to the application.

If this be so; Then why do you that are the servants of God question God's love to you, and call your own condition into question because of your temptations, or because of the hard things that you meet withal from the hand of your temptation? Oh! says one, if God loved me, I should never be thus tempted, I should never suffer such hard things by temptation as now I do: was there ever any of God's children tempted thus? Surely this cannot stand with grace. But was not Jesus Christ tempted? Yes, but I am tempted mnay times to doubt of my childship, whether I be the child of God, son of God, aye or no. And was not Christ thus? There were two special times of Christ's temptation; once when he entered upon the ministry; once when he went out of the world; and you shall see, how at both these times he was followed with this temptation. In the ivth of Matthew, there you read of the first, and in the combat, twice, If thou be the Son of God, says the devil, putting an *if* upon his Sonship: and again, If thou be the Son of God; putting another *if* upon his Sonship. So when he was upon the cross; the devil's instruments speak his own language, they had not forgotten it: If he be the Son of God, let him come down; putting an *if* upon his Sonship again. The devil follows this close. Oh! but I am tempted many times to use indirect

means to get out of trouble, out of mine affliction. And was not Christ so? when he was an hungry, says the devil to him, "Command that these stones be made bread." Oh! but I am tempted, I am loth to say what it is, sometimes even to lay violent hands upon myself. And what said the devil to Christ? Throw thyself down off the pinnacle of the temple. Oh! but I am tempted to horrid and blasphemous things that I am afraid to name, and my heart trembles to think of. And was not Christ thus tempted? says Satan to him, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." What? worship the devil! Oh! horrid blasphemy! Blush, O heavens, and be astonished: "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Oh, but I am tempted to despair: sometimes, I confess, I am able to read God's love, and to say, that God is with me, and I think I can say, I know that God is with me: but at another time, Oh, how unlike am I unto myself, and I say mercy is gone, and Christ is gone, and hath left me as an orphan. And I pray consider how it was with Christ in this respect; he went as near to it as could be, without sin. It is Musculus's observation. In the xvith of John: "Behold," says Christ at the 32nd verse, "the hour cometh," speaking of his suffering hour, "yea, it is now come, when ye shall be scattered every one from his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone because the Father is with me," (speaking of his suffering hour.) And yet when he was upon the cross, he says, Father, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" How diverse does he seem to be from himself: says he, I am not alone, because the Father is with me. And yet when he comes into the hour, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Oh, but I have suffered as much as ever any did, I have suffered by the hand of my temptations, they have been a continual torment to me, and I have suffered much from them. Well, but have ye suffered more than Christ suffered? It is said in the text, "For in that he suffered being tempted." What a mighty suffering was it, for the glorious God of heaven and earth to have such temptations thrown in upon him; any one temptation to be lodged in his mind, what a mighty suffering was this! Thus you see how Christ suffered.

And, beloved, He suffered and was tempted, that he might

succour you that are tempted. Will you question his love then, because of your temptation or your own condition? do ye know what ye do? Suppose that your Father should leave you a great estate, and give you good evidences; and a cunning lawyer comes and writes upon the back side of your evidence, Naught, naught: will ye because of that, join with him and say, that your father hath given you nothing? Christ hath given you in a great estate of mercy, and hath given you good evidences for it; and Satan now comes and writes upon the back side of your evidence, and says, This is naught. Will you join with him against God and Christ? what wrong is this to his love: think of it, I pray, you that are the saints and people of God: Be humbled under every temptation, though it be never so small; but never question your condition, though your temptation be never so great.

There is indeed, something of a suffering, a malignant quality, an affliction in every temptation when it takes least; and therefore, look how you would walk under an affliction, so walk under your temptation. In your affliction, you will walk humbly; so under your temptation do. In your affliction, you will examine the cause, especially if your affliction lie long upon you; so in your temptation do. In your affliction, you will seek God early; so in the morning of your temptation do. In the day of your affliction, you will engage to God; the day of affliction is the day of engaging, and you say, Oh, if the Lord will deliver me, through his grace I will do so and so: so in your temptation do. In your affliction, you will take heed of those sins that you are most apt unto in the time of affliction; so do in the time of your temptation: for example thus: in affliction, a man is very apt to be discouraged, to have his heart sink, and to die within him; so in temptation, take heed of that. In affliction, a man is apt so to mind his present burden, as to forget all his former mercy; so in the time of temptation take heed of that. In the time of affliction, a man is very apt to be froward, and impatient, to break out into frowardness and impatiency, though he did not so before. As the wood that is laid upon the fire, sends forth filth which you did not see in the wood before it came upon the fire: so men are apt to send forth filth, and much frowardness and impatiency in the time of affliction, when you took them for good natured people

before, and thought there was no such frowardness in them, and no such impatiency; so in the time of temptation, also, take heed of that. In the time of affliction, men are apt to make an evil construction and interpretation of things; affliction raises passion, and passion puts other colours upon things than formerly: and so in time of temptation, we are apt to make strange constructions of God's dealings, and Christ's dealings with us; take heed of that. In time of affliction, men are apt to change their behaviour; David did so, he let fall his spittle upon his beard, and feigned himself mad; he changed his behaviour: and so are men apt to change their behaviour in times of temptation; take heed of that. In time of affliction, men are apt to stint and limit God, and say, Can God provide a table now? and can God deliver now? and so also in the time of temptation, men are apt to say, Can God provide now? and can God deliver now? and so stint and limit the Holy One of Israel; take heed of that. In the day of affliction a gracious heart does rather rejoice that he hath any opportunity to exercise his grace, than mourn for his present burden: so do you now. In the day of affliction, a gracious heart doth more desire to be cleansed than to be delivered; wishes rather that his heart may be sanctified by his affliction, than that his affliction may be removed. There is something of a suffering (ye have heard) in every temptation: now then, does a temptation arise and press in upon you; go to the Lord, and say, Lord, though I meet with hard things from the hand of my temptations, and these temptations have lain long upon me: yet I do rather choose grace than peace; rather to be cleansed, than to be delivered. Oh! my beloved, how well it might be with us, if we did but improve our temptations: what a gaining day, what a learning day might the day of temptation be; yea, what an harvest day unto us, when Satan desires to winnow us.

But you will say unto me, We are greatly unskilled in this matter; temptations I have, and great temptations, wherever I go, in every business: but oh, how should I so order things and manage my thoughts, and my heart, as that I may be able so to walk under these temptations, that I may have peace and comfort in the latter end?

Beloved, the next point tells us, that Jesus Christ is a

succouring Christ to all his tempted people: and I intend, God willing, to show you how Christ succours, and how we should draw succour from him under temptations. But for the present, give me leave to give you some rules and directions against these suffering temptations, and so I will wind up all.

First, Take heed that you do not yield to anything, that you may be rid of; that you do not yield to any part of the temptation, that you may be delivered from. It is more easy to keep the enemy out of the town, than to get him out when he is come into it; if he get into the town, and get into the market-place, it will be a more hard thing to get him out again. It is an easy thing to keep a stone on the top of an hill while it lies there; but when it once begins to roll down, it is a hard thing to stay it, and you cannot say how far it shall go. How many are there that say when they are tempted, I will yield but once, I will yield but a little, and I will never yield again, this is the last time: oh! but your once yielding, and your yielding but a little, engages your heart to the whole work. You should watch and pray against temptation; "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation:" he does not say, Watch and pray that you be not tempted; but watch and pray that ye *enter* not into temptation. It is one thing for temptation to knock at the door, and another thing to come in: when temptation enters you, you enter into temptation; take heed of that.

Again, Take heed that you do not carry the sin and the guilt of your old condition into a new condition. See your call into a new condition, before you leave your old condition. Never count yourself safe or secure in any condition; but as soon as ever you come into any condition, observe what are the snares and temptations of that condition. Some there are that carry the evil of their former condition into an after condition, into a new condition; and then, as Rachel carrying away her father's idols, tempted Laban to follow after.

Some again, they do not much mind their calling to a condition, nor do not go in the strength of their call; whereas you shall observe, that when Peter was called to stand before the princes and rulers, he did boldly profess Christ, because his call did lead him thereunto; but when he was not called

into the high priest's hall then he falls before a tempting wench. Others again there are, that think their condition will secure them. Oh, says one, if I were but in such and such a condition, then I should be safe and free from Satan's temptations; whereas, several conditions, have several temptations, and the devil does use sometimes to tempt a man to alter his condition, so that by your very avoiding a temptation you fall into it. Take heed of this.

Thirdly, If temptation do arise, observe the temptation; and know that there is some suitable disposition of your own wherein the devil does lay that temptation, and labour to file and pare off that disposition. Beloved, the devil observes the situation of our hearts, and accordingly does plant his ordnance: he seldom tempts, but he lays his temptation in our own disposition, something suitable unto the temptation. So when David had a mind to number the people, then the devil stands up, and provokes him to number the people, suitable to his own disposition. When our Lord and Saviour Christ was an hungry, then he comes and tempts him to turn stones into bread. When, again, he cried out and said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" then says the devil's instruments, If thou be the Son of God, then come down and show thyself. He does usually lay his temptation in our own disposition that is suitable to the temptation. And therefore, I say, first observe the temptation, then know you have a disposition subservient thereunto, and the devil lays his temptation in that disposition, and presently falls to work, and labours to file and pare off more and more that disposition in Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, When a temptation arises, do not always stand to answer it in the kind; but sometimes turn your mind and thoughts off it to another object. It is in our deliverance from a temptation, as in our comforts under an affliction: a man hath a great affliction upon him, possibly the death of some friend that is near and dear unto him, and you go to comfort him, and in comforting him, you fall a speaking of his friend departed: whereas the way to comfort him, is not to speak of the person departed, but fall into conference about some other good thing different: and by that time his heart is settled upon some other thing, then you may come back again and speak of the friend departed without grieving

of him; but otherwise, even in your comfort you fetch out tears. And so I say in regard of temptation: the way to avoid temptation is not always to apply a salve directly pertinent to the temptation; but turn off your mind and your thoughts to some other good object, and by that time your mind is settled upon other objects, you will be easily able to meet with the temptation.

Fifthly, Above all things take the shield of faith. "Whom resist, stedfast in the faith." "Simon, Simon," says our Saviour, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may winnow you: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:" that must do it. That same woman that came to Christ for her daughter, she met with great temptations: there was the temptation of her calamity; her daughter possessed: there was a temptation of Christ not answering, but delaying her answer: there was a temptation of Christ's seeming denial; "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." There was a temptation of her own unworthiness; "It is not lawful to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs:" yet notwithstanding she believes. Oh! says our Saviour, "Woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And so I say, though your temptations be twisted one within another, and one stands at the end of another; do but get the prospect of faith, and you will be able to look over all. When temptation, therefore, arises, say, Lord, though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee: and, Satan, though thou slayest me, I will keep to Jesus Christ. It was the speech of Taulerus, one that Luther prizeth above all: says he, Though the mariners may make use of their oars in the time of calm; yet when a storm comes down, the mariners leave all and fly to their anchor. So, though at other times we may make use of resolutions, and vows, and the like; yet when the storm of temptation comes down, nothing then but fly to the anchor of faith, nothing then like to casting of anchor into the vail. And as if the Holy Ghost put all on this, he calls faith our anchor; and he calls faith our shield. All dangers are either sea dangers or land dangers: if your dangers be sea dangers, faith is your anchor; and if your dangers be land dangers, faith is your shield. And therefore, I say, when temptation arises, labour then to exercise your faith, and say,

Oh, how should I do this thing, and sin against my Christ, and sin against my God? Satan, thou tellest me, All this will I give thee, if thou wilt do this thing: Aye, but how shall I do this and sin against Jesus Christ who hath loved me and given himself for me? Satan, thou tellest me, that if I do yield, God is merciful, and God will pardon me: Yea, but Satan, God hath pardoned me already, and therefore I will not yield; and because I know that the Lord would pardon me if I did it, therefore I will not do it. Thus labour to exercise your faith in time of a temptation.

Sixthly, Be sure of this, When temptation arises, do not fear too much, nor do not fear too little. I confess, it is an hard thing to carry it equally between too much and too little; but, beloved, if you fear too much, you honour Satan, you weaken yourselves: immoderate fear weakens. And if you fear too little, then you grow secure; security betrays you, and so you lose all before you strike a stroke. Wherefore this rule is: If temptation arise, do not fear too much, though the temptation be never so great: do not fear too little, though the temptation be never so small.

Seventhly, Art thou assaulted by temptation? Either you do overcome, or you are overcome: if you do overcome, be thankful, lest you lose your former victory, by your after unthankfulness. And if you be overcome, yet do not lay down the weapon, hold it up still, stand upon your guard. The devil tempts that he may tempt; and he is willing to be overcome in the skirmish, that he may overcome you in the battle; and he brings up the greatest temptations in the rear: as Job's afflictions were greatest at the last: yea, he tempts us to break the law, and sin against the law, that he may tempt us to sin against the gospel. This is the seventh rule: If you be overcome, or be not overcome, walk thus.

Eightly and lastly, If temptation do arise; be sure that you make some improvement of it for the better. If an enemy come and make an assault against one of your garrison towns, and he goes away and gets no hurt, he is encouraged and invited to come again; for, says he, I lost nothing, though I did not gain and carry the town, yet I lost nothing. But now, if upon his assault he loses many men, and his ordnance; I will come no more there, says he, for there I had such and such a great loss. Thus it is with Satan when he

comes before a soul with his temptations: There is a soul, says he, I came before him with my temptations, and though indeed I did not carry it, I did not get the thing I would, yet I lost nothing, and therefore I will go again. But there is a soul, and there is a heart; I came before him with my temptations, and I confess I lost much; I tempted and he prayed, and the more I tempted the more he prayed, and the more I tempted still, the more he did go to Jesus Christ, and therefore I will tempt him no more. Beloved, labour to improve your temptations; go to God with your temptations in your hands, and pray over your temptations: and if you improve your temptations, you shall not be troubled with Satan; and therefore you are troubled with Satan so much, because you improve your temptations no more. Oh, how well might it be with us, if we did but improve our temptations! what a good day would this be; what a good day might be this sad day of our temptation, if we did but improve our temptations. And I beseech you think of it, how we may improve them more and more. You know what our Saviour said concerning the false ground; In the time of temptation it fell away: let that awe our hearts. You know what our Saviour says again by way of comfort unto his disciples; "You continued with me in my temptations, and therefore I appoint unto you a kingdom:" and blessed are they that do continue and hold out this siege. Beloved, these turning times are tempting times: and I think I may truly say, if ever there was an hour of temptation upon this kingdom, this is the hour of England's temptation, it is an hour of temptation. Oh! you that are the servants of God, and the disciples of Jesus Christ, will ye not watch with him one hour? an hour of temptation it is; but this is our comfort, it is but an hour: and therefore you that are his servants and disciples, will you not watch with him one hour? Watch and pray, watch and pray: some pray, but they will not watch; and some pretend to watch, but they do not pray. Therefore that I say to you, to myself, and to all is, Watch and pray: if you watch, you enter into your master's joy; if you watch not, you enter into temptation: Oh! let us all watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation.

SERMON II.

"For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 18.

BY the word tempted in the first clause, relating to Christ, we are to understand Satan's solicitations to evil (as ye have read in the former sermon). By the word tempted in the last clause, "He is able to succour them that are tempted," especially to understand those solicitations of Satan and our own sins, by comparing the former verse with this. As if the apostle should say: For in that our Lord and Saviour Christ was tempted by Satan, solicited to what was evil; he is able to succour them that are both, either solicited to evil or overcome thereby.

But how is it said here, He is able to succour them that are tempted, in that he himself suffered being tempted? Was he not as God able to succour them that are tempted? Why then is it said, In that he suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted?

There is an ability of sufficiency, and an ability of idoniety. As God, indeed, he is able to succour those that are tempted: but by being tempted in the flesh, he is able, that is, apt and idonious to succour those that are tempted. There is an absolute ability and a respective ability as he is High Priest. As God indeed, he was able to succour them that are tempted, though he had not been tempted: but he speaks of Christ here as our High Priest; and so by being tempted, he is able to succour them in that way. There is, as I may so speak, a scientifical ability, or an experimental ability. As he was God, he was able in the first sense to succour, it is true: but by being tempted, he is able experimentally to succour them that are tempted.

It is an ability of disposition and compassion that here he speaks of. And therefore in the vth chapter, speaking of the same thing, he saith concerning the high priest, That he can have compassion on the ignorant. and those that are out of the way. So then, Christ by being tempted, is able to succour those that are tempted with an ability of idoniety, an

experimental ability; with an ability of compassion and disposition, and gracious inclination. And so the observation that lies before us is this:

The Lord Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ to tempted souls.

In the former doctrine ye heard, That God suffers his own servants and dearest children to be sorely tempted. Now this doctrine holds forth the remedy: Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ to tempted souls. As our hearts are full of sin, so his heart is full of succour, he is a succouring Christ. His names and titles speak him so. His nature speaks him so. His offices, his doctrine, his life and conversation, his death and sufferings call him a succouring Christ. I shall not run through all these particulars. But because men are known by their names, I will fix there a little: and we shall see how all the names and titles of Christ call him a succouring Christ.

If we search the Scriptures, we may observe, that the names of Satan, of the devil, carry malice with them, and evil against them: And the names of Jesus Christ are contrary thereunto, as holding forth a succour against all that evil that is in him who is the evil one.

Is the devil called Satan? that is, an adversary: Jesus Christ is called our Friend. Is Satan called Diabolus? the accuser, or the accuser of the brethren: Jesus Christ is called our Advocate. Is Satan called a destroyer? Jesus Christ is called our Saviour. Is Satan called a lion, that goes up and down seeking whom he may devour? Jesus Christ is called a Lion of the tribe of Judah. Is Satan called a serpent and old serpent? Jesus Christ is called the Brazen Serpent. Still names of relief and succour answerable unto those names of Satan.

We shall observe, that there is no evil in sin, but there is somewhat in the name of Jesus Christ that speaks the contrary, contrary succour. Is sin called ανομια or a transgression of the law? Jesus Christ is called our Righteousness: "The Lord our Righteousness." Is sin called folly? Jesus Christ is called Wisdom, "The Wisdom of the Father." Is sin called an infirmity or weakness? He is called the Rock, and the Rock of Ages, and the Arm of the Lord. Is sin called darkness? He is called Light. Is sin called pol-

lution or uncleanness? His blood is the "Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness to wash in." Is sin called death? He is called Life. Is there ignorance in sin? He is called our Prophet in opposition to that. Is there disorder in sin? In opposition to that he is called our King to order. Is there guilt in sin? In opposition to that he is called our Priest; he is called our Propitiation in that place of John: but in the iiird of the Romans, and the 25th verse, he is called our Propitiatory, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation," so you read it, but rather, ιλαστηριον a propitiatory; the same Greek word that the Septuagint used for the Jews' propitiatory: and in that he is our Propitiation or Propitiatory; this speaks him a succouring Christ.

Famous was the succour and relief that the Jews had from their cities of refuge: and as if the Holy Ghost intended the confirmation of this truth that is now before us, those Hebrew names that were given to the cities of refuge are given to Christ. Is any of the cities of refuge called Kedesh? signifying holy. He is called, Holy, holy, holy. Was another city called Shechem? signifying shoulder: Upon his shoulder is the government; and the lost sheep brought home upon his shoulder. Is another city called Hebron? from society or fellowship: By him we have fellowship with the Father. Is another called Golan? signifying one revealed or manifested: It is said of him, He was manifested in the flesh. Is another city called Ramoth? things exalted: Him hath God exalted, and by him are all exalted. In the phrase of the New Testament, he is called our Father, and our Brother, and our Friend, and our Shepherd; a Hen, a Lamb, a Door: there are none of all his names, but speak him full of sweetness, and loving disposition, and succour unto poor souls.

But that I may the better clear up this truth I shall deliver myself these four ways.

First, That Jesus Christ is able to succour tempted souls.

Secondly, That he is willing to do it.

Thirdly, That he is faithful in doing of it.

Fourthly, How he doth it, in the day and time of their temptation; and so come to the application.

First, He is able to do it, he is able to succour them that are tempted. He is able (saith our apostle in that xviith of

the Hebrews) to save those that come unto God by him, he is able to save them to the uttermost: as Satan tempts to the uttermost he is able to save to the uttermost. And as they sin to the uttermost, he is able to save to the uttermost. A man is said to be able to do all that which he hath a commission, and power from God to do: the Lord Jesus Christ in the iiird of the Romans and the 25th was set forth to be a propitiation: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation." "He hath laid help upon one that is mighty:" and that is Christ. Designed, and called he is to the office of the high priest. The proper work of the high priest's office was to condole with, relieve and succour the people against their sins; and the more eminent any high priest was, the more in this work. In the xviith of the Hebrews, we find all along, how abundantly he excels all the high priests that ever were. As for other high priests, they did not take an oath when they came into their office: but he swears. Other high priests, had sins themselves to offer for: but he holy and separate from sinners. Other high priests died, and did not continue so for ever: but he "liveth for ever to make intercession." Other high priests offered not themselves: but he offered up himself. He was a king and a priest: they were not. They indeed entered into the holy of holiest, but it was earthy: he is gone into the holy of holiest and that is heavenly. They were but types of him, shadows: if a shadow fall upon a dirty ground, it cannot make it dry: but the sun can: and yet notwithstanding, these other high priests, the apostle saith of them, "Being compassed about with infirmities; they could have compassion on those that are ignorant, and out of the way;" they men of infirmities, sinners; they in the time of the law: how much more is Jesus Christ able to succour, who is so transcendant an High Priest, and excelling all others that ever went before him. I will say nothing of the great power that he hath with the Father, or in his own hands: the keys of hell and death. He is able by conquest for to succour you that are tempted: he is able by conquest for to raise the seige that is laid against our souls; he hath beaten through the enemy: as now, if a town be beleaguered straitly, besieged by an enemy, and the enemy abroad in the field, having an army in the field: if any will come to raise the siege, they must fight through the

army, they must beat through the army before they can raise the siege. Never a tempted soul but is thus besieged with temptation, closely begirt, and the devils were abroad in the field, were masters of the field till Christ came: and no man, nor angel was able to beat through: but Jesus Christ beat up the quarters all along, beat through the enemy, cast out devils all along, overcame. Paul by being tempted overcame temptation. So by his dying he overcame death; and by taking our infirmities upon him, he overcame our infirmities; and by being subject to the law, he overcame the law, and the curse of the law: and so by being tempted, he overcame temptation; and having beaten the enemy out of the field he is now able to raise the siege; he is absolutely able to raise the siege, which none else is able to do: he is able to save to the uttermost. We shall not need to stand long on this.

But you will say, secondly, We will grant Christ is able to succour tempted souls: but is he willing?

Yes, he is infinitely willing to succour poor tempted souls. Our great succour lies in reconciliation with God the Father; as by comparing these two verses together doth appear. God the Father hath set him forth to be a propitiation: it was the will of God the Father, that Jesus Christ should come and make propitiation, it was his will. Now, look into the xlth Psalm, and see what Christ saith concerning the will of the Father; verse the 7th. "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart:" some books read it, "thy law is within my bowels:" thy law is within my heart, it is in my desires. Yea, not only, saith he, in my desires: but in the gospel we read it, with desiring have I desired to eat this passover, before he suffered. Desiring have I desired. And, saith he, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and I am straitened till it be accomplished:" I can have no rest till it be done, I am straitened till it be accomplished. Yea, not only so: but, saith he, here in this Psalm, "I delight to do thy will:" it is the will of God he should make propitiation, and so succour: "I delight to do thy will." And in the viiith of the Proverbs: "My delights are with the sons of men:" some read it, "All my delight:" but it is in the plural number. When God laid the foundations of the earth my delights were with the

sons of men. A high, and a great expression. Surely, Jesus Christ cannot but be willing to succour tempted ones, when his delights are with the sons of men.

Again, a man must needs be willing to do that which he is willing to suffer much for, to be at much cost and pains for. David was willing to build the temple, because he laid out so much by way of preparation. And Araunah was willing to have a sacrifice, because he gave up his threshing floor: it appeared he was willing. And now then Jesus Christ is content to suffer so much that he may make a propitiation for sinners, and reconciliation with the Father and so succour; it argues that he is very willing.

Besides, a man is willing to have that done which he is much troubled for if it be not done. You know when Christ came to Jerusalem, he wept, says the text, and he wept: he came a succouring, and they would not be succoured; "How often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not." A hen is a succouring creature: Christ came a succouring, came to gather them as a hen. A hen sits upon the eggs, and hatcheth with the warmth of her body: So doth Christ do with the warmth of his love. A hen sits until the feathers be off her own body, makes her own body naked for to hatch up: And so did Christ. When the chicken is hatched, she succours it, and covers it under her wings; and when the chicken can run abroad, let the hen find but a grain of corn, she clucks, and calls the chicken to her to have part of it: and so did Christ. And when danger comes, the kite comes, she calls the chicken under her wings again to succour it: So does Christ. When he says thus, He came to gather them as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, he came to succour them, but they would not be succoured; see how he takes it: the text says "He wept," he was much troubled. Wise men do not use to weep before company; children will: but those that are very wise, if they will weep, they weep in private. Jesus Christ (that was the wisdom of the Father) falls a weeping, and all because they would not be succoured. Surely then, Jesus Christ is very willing to succour poor sinners. And beloved, this was his love, and this was his compassion in the day of his infirmity: how great is it now in the day of his glory!

Again, It argues that he is very willing to succour poor tempted souls, because he was so willing to cure diseased bodies; when he was upon the earth he was willing to cure them, so willing, as though it did cost a miracle, yet he would do it. So willing, that though they did not know him as he was, but thought him a prophet, yet he would do it. So willing, as that though they did not desire it themselves, but were brought by others, yet he would do it. So willing, as that though they were unmannerly in their coming to him, witness the pulling the tiles off the house, yet he would do it. And that so willing, though much unbelief expressed by those that were brought unto him, yet he would do it. I beseech you consider it: this was a work that Christ came into the world to do; this is the work, the work that Christ came to do, it was to bind up broken hearts: the work that Christ came to do, was to open the prison doors to poor captives: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (you know the place) to administer a word in due season to those that are weak. He hath given me the tongue of the learned to administer a word in due season to those that are weak. Now then, if Jesus Christ was so willing to do the other work which was but his work by the by, which was not the work that he did come about: how infinitely willing must he needs be to do the work that he did come about. But I say, to succour poor tempted ones, this was the work that he came upon; heaven hath not altered him, he hath lost none of his love by going thither: Surely therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely willing to succour poor tempted souls.

Well, thirdly, But though he be able and willing, yet it may be he is not faithful.

Yes, saith the former verse, faithful; merciful and faithful High Priest. Faithful in all his house as Moses was. What honest man will break his word? go contrary to his oath? He is sworn into this office of the High Priest. Yea, we have not only his promise and his oath, but the Father's bond for the Son's performance: "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head;" it shall bruise his heel, she shall break his head. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. This is the work that is in his hand, to succour tempted ones: it shall prosper in his hand. In the viiith chapter of Matthew, we read there at the 16th verse, that

he cast out spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Because he took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses, he took himself to be engaged for to heal the sicknesses and diseases among the people. Beloved! he hath taken our infirmities, he hath borne our sins, and therefore he takes himself engaged also for to heal our foul diseases, to heal those temptations: he is very faithful.

Well, But suppose he is faithful, how doth he succour those that are tempted in the day and time of their temptation? (that is the fourth thing).

He succours before temptation: he succours in temptation: he succours after temptation.

Christ succours tempted souls before the temptation comes, sometimes; by a special manifestation of himself, his love, and fulness to them. When Christ himself was to be tempted, immediately before, the Father said from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And so when Christ sees that a soul is to go into temptation, he speaks out from heaven, and says, This is my beloved servant in whom I am well pleased.

Sometimes he succours before temptation, by laying in of gospel principles and gospel dispositions in the heart. The law is weak, says the apostle. As it is weak unto the point of justification, the matter of justification; so a legal disposition is weak as to the matter of resisting temptation: a gospel disposition is able to bear it off. Christ foreseeing a temptation, lays in such a disposition, and then when it comes, Oh! says the soul, how shall I be able to close with all this love of the world, having received so many love-tokens from my dear Saviour.

Again, He succours before the temptation, by filling the heart with the Holy Ghost. When the vessel is filled with one liquor, it keeps out another. I will return to my house, saith Satan, and I came and found it empty; and so he entered. The Lord, therefore, fills the house, the soul, with the Holy Ghost, and so keeps Satan from entering.

He succours also under temptation, by opening the eyes of him that is tempted to see that it is but a temptation. A temptation is half cured, when a man knows that it is but a

temptation: when a man's eyes are open to see the tempter and the temptation. Therefore men are so hardly cured, because they are hardly persuaded that it is a temptation; when they see that, then they say, Get thee behind me, Satan. Christ opens their eyes.

Again, He succours under temptation, by letting fall some glimpse of his love, some love-look upon a tempted soul. And so, when Peter was in the high priest's hall, Christ looks upon him, and he went out and wept bitterly. It was the sweet voice of Christ that made Peter weep bitterly; Peter's tears came from Christ's eyes first; and though he were much engaged, yet having a love-look from Christ, I will stay no longer, and away he goes. And so, when a soul sees but the gracious eye of Christ looking on him, he breaks off from his temptation: thus he succours.

Again, he succours under temptation by temptation, even from temptation. Beloved! the devil seldom tempts with one single temptation: as we seldom commit single sins, or receive single mercies; so the devil seldom tempts with a single temptation. One may be laid in our natures, and the other laid in our callings. Christ sees now, that one is given to uncleanness or to pride; and so he lets out Satan upon him, to trouble him with blasphemous thoughts, and by the afflictions of those blasphemous thoughts, they are kept from pride, and from wantonness, and delighting in other sins.

He does succour from temptation; I say, from temptation by temptation (sometimes) by causing a word in the temptation to stand out, so as thereby to give the tempted man an hint to Jesus Christ. So when Christ tempted and tried the woman of Canaan; It is not lawful to cast children's bread before dogs. There stood out a word, that word dog; she lays hold on it; "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs." Christ does so order the very temptations of Satan, that some word or other in the very temptation does so stand forth as to hint the soul again unto Jesus Christ.

Sometimes he succours under temptation: by throwing in a promise, lotting the soul upon some promise; which, as a cable, keeps the heart fast in the time of a storm.

And sometimes he succours under temptation, again, by weakening the temptation, and by keeping the heart and the temptation asunder; may be, by raising up some affliction:

woe to that soul when the heart and temptation meet, corruption and temptation meet. The Lord Christ, therefore, sometimes is pleased to raise up an affliction between them, that so these two wicked lovers may be kept asunder. Thus under temptation.

After temptation he succours: by filling the heart with joy unspeakable and full of glory. By sending the angels to minister: as when the devil left Christ, had tempted him and left him; then came the angels and ministered to him. Every way, before temptation, and in temptation, and after temptation, the Lord Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ to tempted souls: he is a succouring Christ. Beloved! he was a man of sorrows that he might be a God of succours; his heart it is full of succours.

I come to the application.

First, Whilst I stand upon this truth, methinks I hear a solemn and gracious invitation to all poor tempted souls to come unto Jesus Christ, to come for succour. There is none of you all but labour under some temptation or other. Ye have read that the Lord Christ is a succouring Christ: shall I need to invite you to come unto him? Ye have read how able he is: and willing he is to succour. His heart is bent to succour you; his arms are open, his bosom is open, his heart is open to poor tempted souls that they may receive succour from him. Oh, therefore, you that are tempted, come unto Jesus Christ that you may be succoured by him: come unto Christ; come unto Christ alone.

You will say, But does he succour all that are tempted? why then are any damned?

Some men will not come unto him: "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." Some come unto him, but make an half Christ of him: they will not come under great temptations; then they are afraid, and then they despair: they will not come under small temptations: then they despise: but for middling temptations, those they will come to Christ for succour in; and thus they make a half Christ of him. Some come to him as to a Moses; make a conditional Christ of him: they must have their own preparations and humiliations before they come unto him, or else they will not come unto him. But, beloved, ye know what the apostle says, in the viith of the Hebrews: "He is able to save unto

the uttermost those that come to God by him." Those that come to God by Him: if you come unto Him he will succour.

But my temptation is an old temptation, an ancient temptation; I have gone under fears and temptations for many years together, I may say, almost my whole life: and will Jesus Christ succour such an one as I am?

Pray what think you of the verse that goes before the text? read it and consider it: the 14th and 15th verses: "He himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." And at the 15th verse: "Deliver them from Satan that were all their life-time subject to bondage." That he might deliver them from Satan that were all their life-time subject to bondage: in fear of death, and all their life-time subject to bondage.

Art thou, therefore, a man or woman that hath gone up and down, all thy days, in fear of death, and fear of hell, and been in bondage all thy life-time? See, he came to deliver such souls: such tempted souls as these are, Christ came to deliver.

Oh! but my temptation is not a bare temptation, there is much affliction that is mixed withal: and will he deliver those?

Yes, you know how it was with Jacob: Jacob used indirect means to get the blessing; Esau's heart rose against him: Jacob flies for it; when he was in the field, in the night, then Christ appears to him: a ladder, whose top was in heaven (the Deity), the bottom on earth (the humanity), and angels ascending and descending. All the while he was in his father's house he never had this vision of Christ, but now, when he lay in the open field, Christ appears for his succour by his angels thus.

Oh, but my temptation is not such; but my temptation is mixed with much corruption; I have a proud heart, an unclean heart, a froward heart: will the Lord Jesus Christ lay such a wretched heart as mine is in his bosom? Oh, will he succour such a soul as I am?

For answer to this, I pray consider these three things with me: the Lord Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ ye have read; and,

First, He will succour tempted sinners most when they are most tempted. When the child is sick, and when the child is most sick, then the mother comes forth and succours it, then love sits upon the bed-side, then love lays the child in her bosom. And, says he, in the lxvith chapter of Isaiah, and at the 13th verse, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

Again, secondly, he will not only succour thus, but he will succour you that are tempted, when you cannot succour yourselves; when your own thoughts cannot succour you, when your own thoughts dare not succour you, or when your own thoughts trample upon your evidences, and when your own thoughts shall make a mutiny in your hearts, and set all on fire: "In the multitude of my thoughts thy word comforts my soul." The Lord knows how to deliver in the time of temptation, though you do not know; and when you do not know it, then he knows, and then he will deliver when you know not. Read again the same place, the 13th verse of the lxvith of Isaiah. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Who are those? says he, at the 5th verse. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word, and you that are cast out by your brethren: as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you:" you that lie and tremble before the promise, and dare not draw near unto it, as a mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.

Thirdly, He will not only succour thus, but he will succour poor tempted souls with a notwithstanding: notwithstanding all their failings, notwithstanding all their infirmities. Joseph, a type of Christ, his brethren sold him away, he endured much misery. Afterward his brethren came to want, and they go down to Egypt to him; and when they came there, Joseph succours them, notwithstanding all their former unkindness: I am your brother Joseph, I am Joseph your brother; it is true you sold me, and thus and thus you dealt by me; but you are come for succour, and I will succour you with a notwithstanding. So says the Lord Jesus Christ: Poor tempted soul, I know how thou hast dealt by me, how thou hast sold me, how thou hast neglected me, how thou hast crucified me; but I will succour thee with a

notwithstanding, notwithstanding all thy guilt and all thy fear, I will succour thee with a notwithstanding.

Three great succours that the Jews had in the wilderness. Succour from the rock, that gave out water; succour against their thirst. Succour from the manna that came down from heaven; succour against their hunger. Succour from the brazen serpent; from the fiery serpents that stung them. All these three were great types of Christ. "And the rock was Christ," says the apostle. And says Christ himself, "I am the bread," speaking of the manna. "And when I am lifted up," speaking of the brazen serpent, alluding to it. Now look into the story and you will find, God did not give out these succours to them till they murmur; in the xvth of Exodus, there they murmur and murmur and murmur, and then God opened the rock, and God gave them water notwithstanding. And in the xvith of Exodus there he gives them bread. And in the xviith there he opens the rock: but first they murmured; the Lord gave them these succours with a notwithstanding. The thing that I mean is this: Will the Lord give them a typical Christ for their succour, with a notwithstanding, and will he not give poor tempted souls a real Christ with a notwithstanding? notwithstanding all, if they do come unto him, if tempted souls do but come unto him? Oh, what a mighty encouragement is here unto all poor tempted souls to come unto Jesus Christ? Oh you, come unto Jesus Christ, you that never came unto Jesus Christ, come unto Jesus Christ, you shall find him a succouring Christ.

Secondly, If this doctrine be true, what ground of strong consolation is here unto all the saints? Oh, you that are the servants of God, children of God; you that are saints, will you ever doubt of Christ's love again? will you ever suffer your hearts to lie under the pressure of despondent fears again? Doubting arising from ignorance, mistakes of Christ; we put Esau's clothes upon him; we make him an angel of darkness and then we fear him. Ye do not look upon him as a succouring Christ, and therefore you are so full of doubtings; or if you do, you do not actuate your considerations and your notions on him.

Beloved! Either there is a truth in this doctrine; or else there is not. If there be not, what mean all the proofs that

ye have had? And if there be a truth, if the Lord Jesus Christ be a succouring Christ to tempted souls; why then should you not triumph in him? and say, Well nothing shall separate me from the love of God in Jesus Christ: I am persuaded, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Thus Paul reasoned in the viiith of the Romans. And I pray mark it; "Who then shall separate us? (says he at the 35th verse) shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life," &c. Whence did arise this persuasion? (at the 23rd verse) "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth." Mark, he does not say, It is God that justifies me; but only in the general, "It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died." He does not say, It is Christ that died for me; but it is Christ that died.

You will say, Aye indeed, if I could say, That God justifies me; and Christ died for me; then I would say with Paul, that nothing shall separate.

Paul raises this persuasion thus; it is God that justifies, and it is Christ that died.

Aye, but was there any temptation, in any of all these that Paul speaks on?

Yes sure: why does he say else, "That in all these things we are more than conquerors?" There is an adversary's power in this. And what think you when he says, "That neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities and powers?" Does not the devil come in there, under principalities and powers? Neither does he say thus; I will hope well now, that because Christ dies, and it is God that justifies; I will hope well: No, but "I am persuaded, none of all these shall separate me from the love of God in Christ." Though I have feared, I will fear no more. Thus he makes his triumph. Oh! what strong consolation is here to all the saints? You that are the tempted saints of God, do not your hearts burn, and glow within you with love to

Jesus Christ? and will you question his love to you? Did Christ come and succour you? and will you not succour yourselves? Is his heart full of succour toward you? and will not you own it? The Lord rebuke our unbelief.

Thirdly, If Jesus Christ be a succouring Christ: then let us be succouring christians. Shall the Lord Jesus Christ take a poor tempted soul into his arms? and shall I thrust him away with my hand? shall the Lord Christ take him into his bosom? and must I thrust him out of the city, and the place where he dwelt? Shall the Lord Jesus Christ carry a poor tempted soul upon his shoulder, by way of succour? and shall I carry him upon my shoulder as a burden? It was Christ's command: "See that ye love one another, as I have loved you." And how did Christ love us? "He loved us, and gave himself for us:" he loved us, and was made in the form of a servant, took our infirmities upon him: he loved us, and was tempted for us, suffered being tempted: and shall not I be willing to succour those that are tempted? You look upon another man's opinion, or his practice, or his froward disposition, and you are offended at it, whom otherwise you would love, and do account godly: but how do you know whether that be not his temptation? that his disposition, and opinion, and practice; how do you know whether that be not his temptation that he lies under? and will not you succour him? Oh! my beloved, how contrary are our dispositions to Christ's? Christ came from heaven to succour those that are tempted: and we call for fire from heaven against those that are tempted. Christ would bear with much smoke, for a little fire: and we will quench a great deal of fire because of a little smoke. Oh! therefore, as you desire to be like unto Jesus Christ, succour the saints: and if there be any thing in their life that does offend you, say, with yourselves; Aye, but may be it is a temptation that such a man lies under; and Christ came to succour those that are tempted, why should not I?

Fourthly, If the Lord Jesus Christ be a succouring Christ, then, why should we yield unto our sins and to our temptations? Though the siege be strait, and violent, and fierce, if a city be blocked up, be beleaguered; if it have but hopes that succour and relief will come, it will hold it out; and if it know for certain that succour will come, it will hold out unto

great extremity. There is never a temptation, but you are beleaguered by it: and when your temptation is about you, say, O my soul, be quiet, yield not; the Lord Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ, and succour will come, and therefore hold it out. Shall the Lord Jesus Christ, shall he succour me against my temptations with his bosom? and shall I take my sins and temptations into mine own bosom? Shall he come to succour me against my sins? and shall I succour my sins that he comes against? What a mighty argument is here to keep us from all our sins, and from yielding to our temptations. Jesus Christ is a succouring Christ to tempted souls.

In the fifth place, If there be a truth in this,—Christ is a succouring Christ; Let us all labour to answer Christ. Beloved, it is the duty and the property of the people of God, to observe what God is doing upon their hearts, and to help on that work. If Jesus Christ be succouring of any of your souls against your temptations; Oh! help it on, help on the work; it is your duty for to help it on, and to answer him.

But you will say, Christ succours before temptation; and he succours under temptation; and he succours after temptation: how shall I answer this? how shall I help his work on?

Give me leave to give an answer unto this question, and so I will wind up all. Does the Lord Jesus Christ succour before temptation? Observe his succours, and lay them up in your hearts against a rainy day: gird your sword upon your thigh, it may not be to seek when the enemy comes; have it in readiness. You do not lay the plaster on upon the wrist for the ague, when the ague is on, but before it comes. Observe what those tokens of love are that Jesus Christ does throw into your bosom before a temptation comes, and lay them up carefully there.

And, beloved in the Lord, labour to keep the sense of his love warm upon your hearts. Look as it is with water in winter; so with your hearts in this respect: so long as the fire is under the water, and the water is hot, it freezes not; but when the heat goes off, and the water is cold, then ice comes upon it. And so long as your heart is kept up in the sense of Christ's love, and warm with Christ's love; so long the ice comes not, the temptation comes not. The slumber

of grace is a preparation to sin and a preparation to temptation. When once our hearts grow cold, and grow remiss; then way is made to temptation: and therefore if you would answer Jesus Christ, Oh! labour to keep the sense of his love still upon your hearts.

And when the temptation is come, then look upon Jesus Christ. No temptation so violent or fierce, but a thought may steal out, and get a look upon Jesus Chrsst. The sight of Christ on the cross, is a judge upon the bench against all temptations. The consideration of three things keeps one from the power of temptation: the worth of a soul; the heinousness of sin; and the love of Christ. And you see all these in Christ upon the cross. When temptation comes, stand and look upon him. You know, that when the Israelites were stung, they were then to look upon the brazen serpent, and by their very looking upon it, they were cured thereby. The Lord Jesus Christ is our brazen serpent, lift up upon gospel poles, having more excellency than any brazen serpent. This was but a piece of brass; he is the God of glory. That for a time; he is our High Priest, and lives for ever. That for the Jews only; but he for Jew and Gentile. That for those that could see, and if any poor blind man was stung, it was a case, what should become of the blind man, how should he look upon the brazen serpent? how should he be cured? but this our brazen serpent is able to give you an eye. Beloved, this ordinance is still on foot spiritually. And therefore Christ says by the prophet Isaiah, "Look unto me from all the ends of the earth, and be saved." Oh! when a temptation comes, poor tempted soul, address thyself to the Lord Jesus, stand wishly looking upon him.

And then, give thy soul over into the hands of Christ all thou canst: put thyself out of thine own hands. So long as the plank, or the board swims in the stream, in the midst of the water, you may draw it along with a little thread; but if once it comes towards the bank, towards the shore, and touches upon the ground, then you can hardly draw it. So long as your temptation is in the stream of Christ's love, and of his blood, you may draw it along the more easily: but if once it come to touch upon your own shore, oh then you draw hard. Whensoever, therefore, a temptation arises, go unto Jesus Christ, and say, O Lord, I have no strength

to stand against this great enemy: I confess it is my duty to resist this temptation, but it is thy promise to succour me under this temptation, and therefore I put myself upon thee.

And then, rest upon Christ. As I used to say, Your very resting upon him makes him your's; your resting on his strength makes it yours; and your resting on his succour makes that yours.

And if the Lord command you to the use of any means, do not rest upon any because they are great, or despise any because they are small. You do observe that the great victories among the Jews, they were obtained by the weakest means; and by the blowing of ram's horns, walls fell down. Those were but types of those spiritual victories under the gospel.

God seldom does wound the head of a temptation, but first the heel (the means) is bruised, whereby the head of the temptation is wounded. As Christ's heel is bruised in his wounding of Satan's head: so I say it is in regard of means: seldom that any means do wound the head of a temptation, but the very heel of that means is first bruised: and, therefore do not despise it though it be small.

And if it please the Lord to cast in any promise, when you are under a temptation, oh, take heed that you do not live upon the letter of the promise. I mean, do not live upon the conveyance, but upon the land: and yet how many do live upon the bare promise, bare letter of the promise. When a temptation comes, pass from the temptation unto the promise, and through the promise unto Jesus Christ, and learn to live upon the thing promised, and not the letter of the promise.

After temptation is over, (I can but touch on things,) either you have the better of Satan, or else the worse. If you have the worse; be for ever humbled, but never discouraged. And if you have the better of him; then rejoice in the Lord, and in all his goodness toward you, and in all his succouring love and mercy. "Rejoice in the Lord evermore, and again I say, Rejoice." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." And then it follows, "They shall rejoice: your hearts shall rejoice." But take heed that your spiritual joy, after victory, does not degenerate into carnal joy, and you be drunk therewith. It is reported of

the English, that once going into Spain, and taking in a town there; after they had taken it, there being much wine in the town, the soldiers fell a drinking of themselves drunk; and the country came down upon them, and beat them out, and recovered the town again. So it is with many: they have victory over temptation, and they begin to rejoice spiritually; but their spiritual joy degenerates into carnal joy, and they are drunk with their joy, and so lose their victory. Beloved, joy not in your joy, but in the God of your joy, after victory.

And if you have the better after temptation, if you have the better: be snre of this, that you improve your victory to more assurance. If the devil get the better of you, he will be sure to improve his victory to your despair: I say, If he get the better of you, he will be sure to improve his victory to your despair. Therefore, if you get the better of him, be sure that you improve your victory to more assurance of God's love in Christ.

Yea, my beloved, for aught I know there is no temptation that a child of God meets withal, but he may improve it to more assurance. As thus:

Surely, if I were the devil's own, he would never trouble me thus. When the strong man keeps the house, all is at peace, and all is at quiet. Now ever since, from the very first day that I have set my face towards heaven and Christ; oh how have I been troubled, and tempted, and perplexed, and vexed in my spirit! Surely, therefore, I am none of the devil's. Now if I had been his own, I should have been more quiet under him: but because I am thus troubled, I hope in the Lord I am none of the devil's, I am the child of God. Thus a man may improve.

And, oh, what a good thing were it, if we did make improvement of our temptations! what gracious improvement might we make of all our temptations; and what a blessed issue might we have in our temptations, if we did go unto Christ for succour!

I beseech you, therefore, in the Lord, when as any temptation arises, go unto Jesus Christ, he is a succouring Christ. He hath national succours; and he hath family succours; and he hath personal succours: you have national temptations; and you have family temptations; and you have per-

sonal temptations, soul temptations, temptations when you are alone. Therefore go unto Christ for succour.

To conclude: I beseech you, beloved in the Lord, go to Christ and try him; put him to it: the greater your temptation is, the more fit work for Christ to cure: do not despair; do not sit down; go to Jesus Christ, you shall find him better than I have spoken, you shall not find him worse; he will go beyond my words, he will not fall short of my words. As the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: so Jesus Christ, in the gospel, goes up and down with his succour, seeking whom he may succour. Go to him for succour: and the God of peace, even Jesus Christ himself, tread down Satan under our feet shortly.

SERMON III.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."—LUKE XXII. 31, 32.

AFTER our greatest enjoyments of God, usually follow the greatest temptations of Satan. And therefore our Saviour speaks these words unto his disciples. In the 19th verse of this chapter, we find them at the Lord's Supper with Christ himself; "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." Having received the supper with Christ himself, and having had sweet communion with him there, our Saviour gives them out a most gracious and blessed promise, at the 28th, 29th, and 30th verses, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Having said thus unto them, he comes in the very next words to acquaint them with a great temptation that was coming down upon them all: and therefore these words are knit together with the former by the word and; "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired." Though you have had this communion with me; and though I have made you this gracious and blessed promise, know,

that there is a great storm of temptation coming down upon you.

Here are two things: the danger of the temptation; and the remedy against it. The danger in the 31st, and the remedy in the 32nd verse. In the 31st verse, we have for consideration, the tempter, called Satan, which signifies an adversary. The tempted; and those are, not Simon only, but all the disciples. Satan hath desired you: it is in the plural number: he directs his speech unto Simon, but the temptation spreads larger upon all the disciples; "That he may sift you."

The manner of the temptation, in two expressions: Satan hath desired you: according to the original word, Satan hath challenged you into the field; as one man does another: and hath desired you, that he may sift you as wheat, and leave you nothing but chaff. Plainly then here is this observation.

The Lord Jesus Christ does give leave sometimes unto Satan, to tempt and winnow his own and best disciples; Christ's own, and best disciples are exposed to Satan's tempting, and winnowings: not Peter only, but James and John and all the beloved disciples of Jesus Christ were exposed here unto Satan's winnowings. He hath desired you, in the plural number, not thee Peter only, but you all my disciples, that he may sift you as wheat.

For the clearing and making out of this truth, I shall labour to discover.

First, What great power Satan hath to tempt, molest, and annoy the children of men.

Secondly, That he puts forth this power especially upon the saints, Christ's own and best disciples.

Thirdly, How he comes by this power, and why God the Father gives him this leave. And so to the application.

First, if ye ask me, What power Satan hath to infest, molest, and thus to tempt the children of men?

I answer, First, ye know that Satan is an angel still; and being an angel, he is a superior creature to man, and therefore, according to the rank of creation, he hath a great deal of power over man. Man hath a great power over the beasts, for man is a superior. The beasts have a great deal of power

over the herbs and the grass, for the beast is the superior. The angels by creation are superior to man; Satan, though fallen, is an angel still: according to the rank of creation, therefore he must needs have a mighty power over the children of men.

Secondly, He is not only a superior creature, but also a more spiritual creature than man, he is a spirit: and upon that account, he is more able to come within man, to close with a man's soul and spirit: being spirit himself, he is more able to converse with, to close and get within our souls and spirits.

Thirdly, He is able to suggest unto man whatsoever he pleases, and to cast in a thousand sinful objects into a man's mind one after another.

Yea, fourthly, and being so well experienced, having studied man for many thousand years: having gotten in all these years so much tempting skill and policy, he is able to discern what that bait is that will take soonest with the children of men, according to their natures, constitutions, complexions, ages, sexes, &c.

Fifthly, He is not only able to present and suggest, but he is also able to follow his suggestions. It is said, "That he stood up, and provoked David to number the people:" he did not only present that evil unto David, but he did solicit: he provoked David to number the people, says the text.

Sixthly, he is not only able thus, but he is able, also, to bemire the fancy, to raise storms in that lower region: a man's soul, ye know, it works by organs, it works by the body, and by the fancy: now Satan being able to disturb the fancy of a man, is thereby able, also, to hinder the very operation of the soul.

Seventhly, He is able to hold down a man's mind unto that particular thing, and to cut off all relief to the soul; so to besiege it, that unless relief come immediately from heaven, he is able to bow down a man's mind, and to hold it down unto that particular.

Lastly, Satan hath so great a power, that the same words that are given unto God, and unto the Holy Ghost, for good, in Scripture, are given, also, unto Satan for evil. The Holy Ghost is said to *enlighten* a man: Satan is said for to *blind* him: "The God of this world hath blinded their eyes,"

says the apostle. The Spirit is said "to rule in us;" Satan is said to "rule in the children of disobedience." The Holy Ghost is said "to work in us mightily;" the same word is used for him also. The Holy Ghost is said to fill the hearts of believers; "They were filled with the Holy Ghost:" so are men's hearts said to be filled with Satan; says Peter to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart?" Indeed, there are three things especially wherein he does fall short: for though Satan is able to discern what temptations would take best with a man, yet he does not know man's thoughts, for God only is the knower of one's thoughts; that is God's prerogative. And though Satan may work very effectually in the children of disobedience, yet, notwithstanding, he does not work with an almighty power. When the Lord converts a man, he puts forth an almighty power in man's conversion. "The same power," says the apostle, "that raised up Christ from the dead, makes ye to believe." The devil is magnipotent, says Luther, but not omnipotent: the devil may be very powerful, but he is not almighty: neither does he put forth an almighty power in his temptations, as God does in the conversion of a sinner. And though he may suggest, and provoke unto what is evil, he cannot force or determine any man to evil. And therefore says the apostle Peter, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart?" He asked Ananias that question, because Satan, though he did fill his heart, he could not have forced, or determined him without his own will thereunto. But very powerful Satan is. In the vith chapter of the Ephesians, you shall see the apostle speaks thus much unto you there, at the 12th verse: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He speaks concerning Satan, as you see in the former verse: "Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood," &c. It is something for a man to have all the world against him, to have all mankind against him: if all mankind should be against one man, you would say, There were a great strength; but behold more than that, here is something more than flesh and blood that every man does wrestle against: "For we wrestle not against flesh and

blood:" all mankind is but flesh and blood, and so there is a weakness; but we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, for authority; and against powers, for strength; and against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. Oh, what a mighty power then hath Satan to infest, molest, and to tempt the children of men.

Whether does Satan put forth this power, and exercise this his tempting power upon the saints and children of God?

Yes, for they are the saints that the apostle speaks of here, in that to the Ephesians: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood." You that are Ephesians, and you that are saints, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. Properly, ye do not wrestle with a man that is down; ye wrestle with a man for to throw him down; but he must be a standing man that ye wrestle withal: ye do not wrestle with one that does run away, but one that stands to it. Now all wicked men, they are down, but the saints, they stand, and they labour to throw Satan down, and Satan labours to lay them all along in unbelief: but they properly do wrestle with Satan, for they stand, the other are fallen already.

Yea, the saints are not only tempted by Satan; but the best, and the most beloved disciples of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament; who more beloved than David and Job? yet they were tempted. In the New Testament; who more beloved than Peter and Paul? One of the circumcision, and the other of the uncircumcision and apostleship, and yet both had special temptations.

Yea, it is possible for one of God's own children to be so far oppressed with Satan, that he may even be weary of his life. In the xth chapter of Job, and the 2nd verse, says Job under his great temptations, "My soul is weary of my life." And if Rebekah were weary of her life because of the children of Heth; much more may a poor gracious soul be weary of his life, by reason of these children of darkness, these powers of darkness, these temptations of Satan.

But you will say, Why should Satan lie so heavy upon God's own children and people? for he may know, that they shall be saved do he what he can. Satan had heard our Saviour Christ say to Peter, The gates of hell shall not prevail against

thee; and yet now Satan tempts: if Satan know this, why should he follow God's children, yea, the best of his children so sorely with sad temptations?

First, Satan is the envious man we read of in Scripture; and when he hears the Lord owning and honouring of his children, then does his envy work, and rise: and when he hears any of God's children triumphing by faith, and making boast of the love of God, then does his malice kindle into a flame; Shall such a one go to heaven, and shall I be damned, says he, shall such a one be received, and shall I be cast away for ever? These are the boilings of this envious man's heart against the children of the Most High.

But, secondly, there is this great reason for it. Satan knows, that if he can but make God's people and the best of his children fall; though they should not be damned, but pardoned, that their fall may be stumbling blocks unto others that may be damned. And therefore, I pray, mark how it is carried concerning David: it is said in the 1 Chronicles xxist chapter, and the 1st verse, "That Satan stood up against Israel to provoke David to number Israel." It is not said thus; And Satan stood up against David, and provoked David to number the people: no, but thus, And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number the people: he stood up against Israel; Why? because he knew, that if he did make David thus to number the people, it would be a stumbling for all Israel, and all Israel should fare the worse by it. When Satan stands up and tempts the master of a family unto sin, he does not barely stand up against him; but in tempting him, he stands up against all the family. When Satan tempts a religious holy man, a beloved disciple of Christ in a town, Satan stands up against all the town in tempting that one man. He stood up against Israel, and tempted David to number the people: and so when he tempts those that are the most beloved disciples of Christ, he stands up against others; and therefore, though Satan knows that their sins shall be pardoned, yet he does follow them with sad and sore temptations.

Thirdly, Satan loves to divide between friends; he is the great make-bare of the world, he loves to divide. He may know, that there is so much goodness between man and wife, that he shall never part them; and yet he will labour to sow

discord among them, that they may live uncomfortably. And so, though he knows he shall never part Christ and a poor believer; yet he will labour to throw jealousies into the heart of a believer concerning the love of Christ. He knew well enough what was said concerning our Saviour Christ; what was said by the angels at the birth of Christ; what was said by the angel to Mary, what was said by Elizabeth; he heard what was said from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" and yet presently he comes to Christ with an if; "If thou be the Son of God:" labouring to throw a jealousy into the heart of Christ, and to doubt of his Sonship, even with God the Father. So I say, although Satan should know that the Lord will pardon such or such a man, yet he loves to make a division between God and the soul, and to cast in jealousies between Christ and a believer. As for others, says he, they are my own already, I shall not need to break into that house, there is nothing but chaff lies there; but here is a godly man, and here is treasure; and therefore he does especially lay his battery against the saints, and those that are the most beloved disciples of Jesus Christ.

But you will say unto me, How does Satan come by this tempting power, this infesting and molesting power?

Great is the power, as we have read already, that he hath, as he is a superior creature: but Satan hath yet another power, and that is the power of conquest; for in Adam's fall, Satan conquered the whole world, all mankind, they were the devil's conquest upon the fall. When a man is converted and turned to God, then he comes out of the kingdom of Satan. But I say, upon the fall the devil made a conquest upon all mankind, and so by conquest he hath a great power. Satan hath leave from God the Father to tempt; I do not say that he hath a special leave for every temptation, not a special commission or permission, or leave for every temptation; but there is no great or extraordinary temptation that does fall upon the children of God, but Satan hath a special leave from God the Father for it. There was a special temptation upon the country, in his running their herd of swine into the sea, and he had leave for that before he did it. There was a special temptation upon Ahab, in the lying spirit of the prophets, and he had a special leave and permission from God for that. There was a special temptation upon

Job, and he had a leave for that. Here was a special temptation coming down upon the disciples, and he had leave for that. Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired you. He was fain to ask leave, and he had leave for that. There is no extraordinary or great temptation befals any of the children of God, but Satan is fain to ask leave for it; he hath a leave for it, before he can come and tempt the soul.

But you will say then unto me, Why does God the Father give Satan leave thus to tempt his own children and Christ's own disciples?

First, take it thus, Look whatsoever is the end and the issue of any evil which befals the children of God, that was the design of God the Father in suffering that evil to come upon them. Now the end and issue of the saints' temptation is always good unto them; and therefore God suffers the temptations of his people, because he hath a design of mercy and love upon them in these temptations. What was the end and issue of Satan's tempting of Adam and Eve? They fell, and then the righteousness of Christ, and eternal life thereby was brought in: this was the end and the issue of it. Now God the Father had this design upon Satan's temptation, all the while Satan was tempting of Adam: and the Lord would never have suffered our heel to have been bruised by Satan's temptation, but that he did intend to break the head of Satan. It was a great temptation that of David, when as Satan stood up and provoked him to number the people: pray, what was the end and issue of that temptation? I shall only name the Scriptures: the 1 Chronicles, the xxist chapter; and the xxiind chapter and the beginning of it; and the 2 Chronicles, the iiird chapter, and 1st verse, compared together you shall find this. First Satan tempts David; he numbers the people, the people being numbered, a plague breaks forth; the plague prevailing, David goes and offers up a sacrifice at the threshing floor of Ornan, and there God told him the temple should be built. David had a long time desired to know where the temple should be built; he says, he would give no rest unto himself, no sleep unto his eye-lids, until he had found out a place for God: you shall find, that David had this place discovered as the issue of this temptation, this was the issue of it; the devil had as good have let David alone, he had as good have been

quiet, for David now had the end and the issue, attained unto that that he never did attain unto before. So I say it is with the people of God, the Lord never suffers his own children to fall into any sin, but he does intend to wean them from that sin that they do fall into even by the falling into it: the Lord never suffers any of his own children to be tempted, but he intends to break the back of that temptation, even by their being tempted. This is the design of God the Father. Oh! what a glorious design of love and mercy is here upon all the temptations of God's people!

But, secondly, God hath yet greater and higher designs: The manifestation of his own power, of his own wisdom, of his own faithfulness, of his own love and free grace.

The manifestation of his power. When Paul was tempted and buffeted by Satan, the Lord said unto him, that his "strength should be perfected in weakness:" in Paul's weakness, God's strength should be perfected.

The manifestation of his wisdom. "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation," says the apostle.

The manifestation of his faithfulness. In the 1 Cor. x. 13, "The Lord is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able to bear."

The manifestation of his free love and grace. And therefore, when Paul was tempted and buffeted by Satan, and prayed against his temptation, the Lord answered thus: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

But in regard of the saints themselves: How should they give a probate or testimony of their uprightness and sincerity, their firm and fast cleaving to God, if they were never tempted? read for this purpose the xiiith chapter of Deuteronomy, and the 2nd and 3rd verses. Before Job was tempted, Satan thought that Job had served God for a boon, for something: "Hast thou not seen my servant Job?" says God; Aye, says Satan, but "Does Job serve God for nought?" Job is an hypocrite, all things go well with him; Job is in a fair and blessed outward condition, and Job was never tempted: does Job serve God for nought? but now touch him, and let me tempt him a little, and see if he does not blaspheme God then: thus Satan then. And just thus is the language of the devil now: Does such a man or woman serve God for nought? he is but an hypocrite, all things go well with him, he was

never yet tempted: but, O Lord, let this man or woman come under my hand, and let me tempt him a little, and see if he does not blaspheme. Well, Satan, says God, Job is in thine hand, only spare his life. And Satan did tempt him and touch him; and instead of blaspheming, behold, blessing: "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his Name." Here now Job gave a testimony that he did not serve God for something, that his heart was sincere and upright. And so, when men can hold out, notwithstanding all their temptations, they give a testimony of their uprightness and sincerity, and that their souls do cleave unto God in truth. For these and many other reasons, the Lord doth suffer his own best and dearest children to be tempted by Satan.

I come to the application.

If God doth suffer his own people and dearest children to be exposed to Satan's temptings and winnowings; Why should any man then doubt of his childship, doubt of his own everlasting condition, and say, that he is none of the child of God because he is tempted? Beloved, I have seen a sore evil under the sun, a vanity even among the saints and people of God: some doubting of the soundness of their condition and the love of God because they are not tempted; others doubt because they are tempted. One says, Oh! I am afraid I am none of the child of God, for I was never tempted; the children of God, they meet with temptations, but I was never yet buffeted, and therefore I am none of God's child: another, on the contrary; I labour under these and these temptations, and therefore, I fear that I am none of God's child: yea, sometimes the same person thus: First, he does not observe his own heart, and says he, I fear I am none of God's child, for I was never tempted. Afterward when he meets with temptation, then he doubts again that he is not God's child because he is tempted. Oh, what childish dealing is this with God your Father!

But, my beloved in the Lord, if this be true, that the Lord doth suffer his own, and best children, to be exposed to Satan's winnowings and temptings, then why shouldest thou conclude that thou art not the child of God because thou art tempted? Oh, but I do not conclude, will some say, that I am not the child of God: I do not conclude that the Lord does not love me because I am tempted, but because I meet

with such and such temptations. Tell me, did not David, Job, Paul and Peter meet with such and such, and so great temptations? Yea, did not Christ himself meet with it? Oh, but my temptations are such as would make one's hair stand upright on one's head to think of them; sometimes tempted even to lay violent hands upon myself. What think ye of Christ? when Satan spake unto him, and tempted him to throw himself down off the pinnacle of the temple. Oh, but I am tempted with such temptations that I am ashamed to name, and my heart aches and trembles when I do reflect on them; even with blasphemous thoughts. What think ye of Christ? was not he tempted to blasphemy? says the devil to him, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me:" what greater blasphemy than to worship the devil? to make a God of the devil himself, what greater blasphemy? Oh! but I fear and doubt my condition, and the love of God towards me, because my temptations are not as the temptations of God's children; but my temptations are such as cannot stand with grace, there is a spot, that is not the spot of God's people: and are there not temptations that are not the temptations of God's people? have not wicked men their peculiar temptations, such as does not fall upon the children of God? I am afraid that my temptations are of that rank and of that sort, and therefore I fear and doubt my condition. Mark I pray, this same word temptation may be considered two ways; either in regard of the formality or form of the temptation, or in regard of the materiality or matter of the temptation.

Take now temptation according to the propriety of the speech and phrase, and so wicked men are not said to be tempted by Satan; by their own hearts they are, but I speak of Satan's temptations, properly the wicked are not said to be tempted by Satan. He is said to rule in them, in the children of disobedience; and he is said to lead them captive at his will: but if ye look into the New Testament, ye will not ordinarily find, that wicked men are said to be tempted by Satan. A man does not tempt his wife, but when he solicits another woman, then he is said for to tempt that woman. As the saints are married to Christ, so wicked men they are matched to Satan; and he is not in propriety of phrase said for to tempt them. Your men-stealers, those that steal

children, they do not tempt their own children for to go with them, they naturally go with their father: but they come and tempt your children, they are other folk's children that they tempt. And so Satan, he is properly said to tempt those that are none of his children. A master does not tempt his servant, he is not said properly to tempt his own servant to dwell with him, or to serve him: but he goes to another man's servant, and speaks to him to come and dwell with him, and to serve him. As for wicked men, they are properly the servants of Satan; and therefore when the devil solicits them to do that which is evil, or to dwell with him, and to converse with him, it is not I say in propriety of speech a proper temptation: but for the servants of Christ, when he solicits them unto evil, then he is properly said to tempt them. This for the form of a temptation.

But now, take a temptation in the materiality of it, for the matter of it, which is a solicitation to evil; and so wicked men are tempted by Satan; yea, they more tempted than the godly are, that is, they are more solicited unto evil by Satan; and the same temptation that godly men are tempted with, wicked men are tempted with: and the same temptation that wicked men are tempted with, a godly man is tempted with. As there is no duty which a godly man does perform, but a wicked man may do it, for the act, and yet remain wicked: so there is no sin, which a wicked man falls into, but a godly man may be tempted to it, and yet remain godly.

But you will say unto me, This evil that is upon my heart, is not the temptation of Satan, but indeed it is the corruption of mine own heart, and therefore I fear my condition. Indeed, if I were sure that it were only the temptation of Satan, I should never question God's love, nor mine own condition because of it; but, oh! I am afraid it is not a temptation of Satan, but the corruption of mine own heart, and therefore I fear all is not right with me.

I answer, first, this is no new thing for God's own people and children, to charge all Satan's temptations upon their own hearts, to lay all at their own door. Wicked men, they charge all their own corruptions upon Satan's temptations, as if they were not their own, but altogether Satan's: godly men, they charge all Satan's temptations upon their own hearts, and

upon their own account, as if they were all their own and nothing of Satan's; this is no new thing. Adam and Eve, when they were fallen, and had eaten the forbidden fruit, then they were ungodly, in the state of nature presently upon the fall before they believed in Christ: and, says Eve, "This serpent gave me to eat;" as if she should say, He hath done it, it is all his work, it is Satan's work, and it is none of mine; being in her unregenerate state, she lays all upon the devil, and frees herself, as if she had nothing to do with it. On the other side, David was provoked by Satan to number the people; yet notwithstanding, see what he says in the 2. Sam. xxivth chapter and the 10th verse. "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people; and David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done; and now I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly." He lays it all upon himself: he does not go now and say, Satan hath provoked me to number the people, and it is Satan's work and none of mine; but he does charge it here upon himself, as if Satan had no hand at all in it. I have done foolishly, says he, and I have sinned, and forgive this great iniquity. This is usual; wicked men excuse their own corruptions, by Satan's temptations: godly men aggravate Satan's temptations by their own corruptions.

But, in the second place, although this be so, that it is usual with the saints thus to do, to charge all upon themselves and nothing on Satan; yet know, that the saints seldom or never do fall into any great sin, but Satan hath a special hand therein. I am not of Origen's mind, to lay all sin upon Satan, not upon man; but I say, there is no great sin that any of God's children do fall into, but Satan hath a special hand and a work therein. And, therefore, if ye look into the New Testament, you will find, that the sins of the godly, they are very often called temptations: in the first of Corinthians, the xth chapter, and the 13th verse, "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will with the temptation, also, make a way to escape. Wherefore (at the 14th verse), my dearly beloved, fly from idolatry;" as if that were temptation too. And so in that vith of Galatians, and 1st verse:

" If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, let thou also be tempted:" lest thou also fall into sin. And so the apostle says unto the Thessalonians, in the first epistle, the iiird chapter, and the 5th verse: " For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain. The meaning is, Lest you are fallen; but it is called temptation to them.

Thirdly, Although this be true, that there is no great sin that the saints do fall into, but Satan hath a special hand in it; yet it is the property and disposition of God's people to be humbled and grieved under their temptations, as if they were all their own and nothing of Satan's. Peter goes out and weeps bitterly when he had fallen; he might have said thus: The Lord told me that there was a temptation coming, Satan had desired to winnow me; and now the word of the Lord is fulfilled, Satan hath tempted me, and I am thus fallen: but not a word of Satan, but he goes out and weeps bitterly, as if it were all his own work. And let me tell you, for your comfort, when as you can mourn over your temptations, as if they were all your own, and nothing of Satan's, the Lord will pardon them to you, as if they were all Satan's, and nothing of your own.

In the fourth place, to speak a little of the difference between these, that ye may know the difference between the temptations of Satan and the corruptions of your own heart.

When as your heart and your flesh trembles and quakes under the first rising and motion of a sin, this is not your own corruption alone, but there is a temptation with it. When the corruptions of one's own heart do work up evil, a man's heart is rather pleased and tickled with it, and consents to it, than any way one's flesh lies trembling and quaking under it. That temptation is not much to be feared, when a man fears himself for his temptation. He is to be feared most that does fear least: and he is to be feared least that does fear most. A godly, gracious man or woman, is humbled under nothing more than under his temptations; he looks upon his temptations, as the greatest afflictions in all the world. As now, take that of blasphemous thoughts; suppose a poor soul troubled with such evil thoughts, such a

poor soul says, I do profess it in the sight of God, I never met with such an affliction since I was born: I have lost children; oh, but that affliction is not like to this! I have lost friends; oh, but that affliction is not like to this! I have lost my estate; oh, but that affliction is not like to this! Man or woman, if it be thy affliction it is not thy sin. And I appeal to you now, you that say ye do not doubt of God's love, ye do not fear your own condition, because of temptations only, but because ye are afraid they are the corruptions of your own heart, and not the temptations of Satan; I appeal to you that say so; Are ye not afraid in yourselves because of your temptations? Do not ye look upon your temptations as your greatest afflictions? Nay, does not thy flesh quake and tremble, sometimes, when a temptation dashes, and beats in upon thy soul? Does not thy very outward man, sometimes, lie quaking and trembling before a temptation? Certainly this is not all the corruption of thine own heart, here is the devil's hand, here is a temptation in it, and, poor soul, thou mayest have some comfort yet; notwithstanding the oppression is so great, yet here is comfort, it is no other but what may stand with grace.

Oh! but you will say, suppose it be all the temptation of Satan, and not the corruption of mine own heart, yet it is a great affliction, and what comfort can I have in this condition?

What comfort! Is it not much comfort to know that there is nothing does befal you but what may befal a true child of God? Sometimes ye say thus: No man's condition is like to mine; did I but know that it is so with other of God's children, then I should be satisfied. This doctrine tells thee, that Christ's own best disciples, sometimes, are exposed to Satan's temptings, to Satan's winnowings.

Is it not a great comfort, for a man to know, that while he is tempted, Christ is at prayer for him? "But I have prayed for thee." In time of temptation you cannot pray, aye but Christ can pray, and he is then at prayer for you: as he said to Peter, so he says to every disciple of his now, "But I have prayed for thee:" poor soul, though thou canst not pray for thyself, yet I have prayed for thee.

Is it not a sweet comfort, for a man to know, that the enemy is overcome before he strikes? Satan's temptation is overcome by Christ's intercession; and Christ prays before

Satan tempts; "But I have prayed for thee:" before the temptation came.

Is it not a choice comfort, for a man to know, that Satan, the great tempter, hath no more power than my Father gives him leave? Thus it is, "Satan hath desired," &c.

Is it not wonderful comfort, for a man to know, that there is something that he can never be robbed of? When a man is travelling on his journey, if he meet with thieves, they take away the money that he hath about him; but when they have taken all his money that he hath about him, Well, says he, though they have taken away my spending money, and that which I did wear about me, yet I have land at home that they can not rob me of. And so says the child of God, or at least he may say so, when Satan comes and tempts him, and robs him of some comfort; yet, blessed be the Lord, I have union with Christ that I can never be robbed of; and I have an inheritance in heaven that thieves cannot break through and steal away. Satan may take away my spending money, my spending comforts that I have here in this world; but Oh! blessed be God, I have such comforts, and such an estate, such durable riches that I can never be robbed of. Oh! you that are the saints and people of God, lift up your heads: you that have been bowed under temptation, these things have I spoken to you, that you may not be overwhelmed with temptation, you that are tempted, but that in the midst of all you may breathe out your souls in the bosom of Jesus Christ.

Well, but you will say, It is not comfort that I look for, or that I follow after; but the truth is, I am sorely tempted, and Satan lies heavy on me, following, and dogging me at the heels to yield unto his temptations; what shall I say, or what shall I do, that I may not yield unto his temptations?

What shalt thou say: if it be possible, do not stand to treat with Satan, do not stand to parley with him; he will dispute you out of all your comfort if you stand and parley with him. You have half lost the field when ye honour Satan, and you honour him when you follow him into his disputes: if it be possible therefore do not stand and parley, or dispute with Satan, but if you must say something to him, and ye must treat, ye must speak; tell Satan then, that therefore you believe it, because he denies it: therefore you do not believe

it, because he affirms it; that you believe the contrary because he speaks thus. When ye are to deal with a great liar, one that is your enemy, and he comes and tells you very ill news, you will say, He is a liar and he is my enemy, and he does it to scare me, and therefore I believe the contrary. Satan is a great liar, and he is your enemy, and therefore when he says unto thee, there is no hope for thee, thou hast been a great sinner, a drunkard for thus many years, a swearer thus many years, there is no hope for thee: say to Satan, therefore I believe the contrary, there is hope for me, because thou sayest there is none, for thou art a liar, yea, the father of lies.

Again, if ye must speak with Satan; then speak of Christ of grace, of the infinite love of God in Christ: he cannot stand before words of grace, and before words of love: not a word of grace, or of free love in all his temptations.

Yea, if you must speak with Satan, tell him, Oh! tell him, what ye find in the ways of God, and tell him, that you believe beyond what ye find; thus: Satan for the present I find nothing but sweetness in the ways of God: thou told me that if I would turn godly I should never have a merry day again, but I tell thee what I now find; I find of a truth that the sourest part of godliness, is sweeter than the sweetest part of wickedness. Satan, I find, that all that ever thou told me is false; thou saidest, I should lose all my friends: I have better. Thou saidest, I should lose all my comforts if I turned godly; I have better, Satan. And this I find, Satan; that all that ever Christ spake unto me, is true: oh! I find infinite sweetness in the ways of God, and I believe beyond what I find; that if the wheels of providence should run never so cross, yet through grace I would believe. Beloved, ye know what the apostle says, "Whom resist, stedfast in the faith:" and "By faith we quench his fiery darts." Must ye therefore needs speak with Satan, speak to him words of faith; not of sense, man, not of reason, but speak words of faith: I charge ye in the Lord, if ye will stand and parley, and speak with Satan, speak words of faith to him, speak words in a way of believing; and it is only faith that brings Christ and the soul together in the time of temptation; and when Christ comes in, Satan goes out.

But you will say, I know it is a good thing and happy, so to answer Satan's temptations as I may not yield: but oh! that I might not be led into any temptation: What shall I do that I may prevent it?

First, take heed that you do not stand playing upon the borders or confines of any sin. If you stand upon the brink of a sin, Satan comes behind and thrusts you into it. Some there are that tempt the tempter, that begin unto Satan, they drink to Satan the first draught, and Satan pledges them, and drinks unto them again. Would you, my beloved, prevent temptation? Oh! take heed how ye stand playing upon the borders of any sin, the holes of the asps.

Again, secondly, If ye would prevent temptation; then labour to get your hearts mortified unto the objects of love and fear. Satan tempts two ways; as a serpent, and as a lion. When Satan tempts as a serpent; then he does make a tender, and an offer of some comfortable, profitable, sweet thing. You shall be like God, "You shall be as God," says he unto Adam and Eve, when he tempted as a serpent, came as a serpent. And so dealing as a serpent with our Saviour Christ, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Shows him the glory of the world, and all this will I give thee. So says he unto a poor soul when he tempts as a serpent, Come and yield unto this temptation, and all this comfort will I give thee, and all this profit will I give thee, and all this repute and honour will I give thee. Thus as a serpent. Sometimes he tempts as a lion; for he goes up and down as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And when Satan tempts as a lion, then he does roar upon a poor soul, and labours to scare him out of his conscience, and out of the good ways of God. And therefore in the book of the Revelation, "Satan shall cast some of you into prison." Satan shall do it. And sometimes he shall stand and rattle the chains of a prison; look, do you hear these? If you will go on in such and such a way, you will lose all your friends; and if you will go on in such a way, I will make it too hot for you, and thus and thus shall you suffer, and it shall cost ye a prison ere I have done with you. Thus now Satan tempts as a lion, by holding terrible objects before a man. It it said that Satan came to our Saviour Christ, and he found nothing in him; so he prevailed not: but Satan comes to us, and he

finds a great deal in us, he finds a disposition in us to be moved with objects of love, unto comfortable, and profitable things: he comes to us, and finds in us a disposition to be moved with fear by terrible objects. Wherefore now, my beloved, do you desire to prevent the mischief of a temptation? oh! labour more and more to die unto all the objects of your outward love, and the objects of fear; die to the objects of love, get your heart mortified to these two objects of love and fear. And be sure of this, if thou wouldest prevent temptation, that ye labour more and more to walk in the light: Satan is the prince of darkness, and he walks in darkness, and he tempts in darkness. "When night comes the beasts go forth to their prey," says the Psalmist. And when Satan sees a poor ignorant soul, that walks in the dark, says he, Here is a fit prey for me. Oh! therefore, you that are ignorant, and have sat ignorant under the ordinances; for the Lord's sake, labour to get more light and more knowledge, get your heart opened unto every truth of God, labour to acquaint yourselves more with gospel light, and set your bosoms open unto every truth of the Lord.

And, beloved! whether you would overcome, or whether you would prevent temptation; whatever means you use; be sure of this, that you take your temptation and dip it in the blood of Christ. Take a candle, that is lighted, and only blow out the candle, the candle is easily lighted again: but when the candle is out, take it and put it into the water, and then it is not so easily lighted again: so now a temptation comes, and you blow it out with a resolution, and you will not yield to it, alas, it is easily lighted again: but now take this candle, take this temptation, and come and dip it in the blood of Jesus Christ, and it will not be so easily lighted again; so you shall be able to prevent temptation for the time to come: never rest alone in resolving, but, oh! take your temptation and dip it in the blood of Jesus Christ.

And if that you do overcome your temptation at any time; be thankful to God: if ye have more than flesh and blood against you, ye shall have more than flesh and blood with you. And therefore, have you overcome temptation? go away and be very thankful, and say, oh! though flesh and blood be against me, yet I have more than flesh and blood

with me, praise the Lord much: and if you have been overcome with temptation, yet be not discouraged; for ye hear the doctrine, God doth suffer his own dear children to be tempted, to be buffetted, to be exposed to Satan's temptings, and to Satan's winnowings. But though ye be tempted, and it be a temptation of Satan, yet ye hear withal, that it is the property and disposition of God's own people to grieve and mourn under their temptation, as if it were all their own, and nothing of Satan's. Wherefore now, my beloved, having heard these things, think on them, and the Lord bless them to you every day more and more.

SERMON IV.

"*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.*"—LUKE XXII. 31, 32.

YE find that these words hold forth the relation of a great storm of temptation coming down upon Christ's disciples. The *danger* of it. And the *remedy* against it. Of the danger somewhat ye heard from the 31st verse. And now I am to speak unto the 32nd verse. "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Here is somewhat implied, and somewhat expressed: implied, Satan's design, and his great design upon their faith. Expressed; Christ's love and care, his special love and care over them, and towards them in this temptation. As if he should say thus, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to tempt you; not only thee, but all my disciples: the temptation is great, and in this temptation, his great design is upon your faith: but I have spoken unto my Father, and your Father, that your faith may not fail. So that hence you may observe thus much:

That in the time of temptation, Satan's great design is upon the faith of the saints, to make their faith fail.

He doth not say, But I have prayed for thee, that thy prayer fail not, or that thy patience fail not, or that thy love fail not; but I have prayed that thy "faith fail not." So that Satan's great design in all his temptations is upon the

faith of the saints, that he may make their faith to fail them.

For the further clearing and opening of these words, and of this truth, I shall labour to show you:

First, What it is for to fail in our faith; and how far the saints may fail in their faith in time of temptation.

Secondly, What an evil thing it is for the saints to fail in their faith in time of temptation.

Thirdly, That Satan's great design in all his temptations, is upon our faith.

Fourthly, How Satan labours to weaken our faith in the time of temptation; what strokes he gives unto our faith, and how we shall be able to bear off those blows in the time of temptation, that so our faith fail not?

If ye ask me, first, What it is for to fail in faith here? I answer, The word in the original signifies, an eclipse, as the eclipse of the sun, or of the moon: and the words may be so translated, But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith be not eclipsed. But according to the ordinary acceptation of that word eclipse, Peter's faith did fail, for it was much eclipsed. The word signifies also, a total defect, such as Judas made, who of a disciple became an enemy, a traitor; and instead of believing fell to despair: and so Peter's faith did not fail. A man's faith is said to fail, either when it falls short of what it hath been, or what it should be; and in both these respects Peter's faith did fail: it fell short of what it had been, it fell short of what it should be. But there is a two-fold failing in faith: one in regard of the acting and exercise of faith; and another in regard of the grace of faith itself. In regard of the acting, working, and exercise of faith, Peter's faith did fail: but in regard of the grace itself, so it failed not. The Lutherans, they say, and contend much for it, that a regenerate man's faith may fail totally, and finally in time of temptation: and so they say that Peter's faith, failed here, when he denied his Lord and Master; because it is said in the next words, "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." As if his faith had failed so far, as he should need a new conversion. But that word translated, When thou art converted (as divers of the learned do well observe) may be translated, again, thus: I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and do thou strengthen thy brethren

again: do thou return to that work again. And so you have the same word used in the Septuagint, translated at the lviiith Psalm, at the 6th verse. "Wilt thou not revive us again?" The word in the Hebrew is thus: Wilt thou not convert, or turn unto us, and revive us? which we translate, "Wilt thou not revive us again?" And so the words here may be translated, (being an Hebraism) But do thou strengthen thy brethren again. But suppose that the words stand according to their present translation, it does not argue, that Peter did fail totally in this temptation: for, the whole life of a christian here, is a continual converting, and turning to God: we repent, and repent again; we turn, and turn again. Every day we turn unto God yet more and more; every day brings forth another conversion: yet not so, as if the former conversion were made void. And if the faith of a believer would fail totally in the time of a temptation; what should be the meaning of those words, in 1 John vth chapter, and the 18th verse. "We know, that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not:" the wicked one: that is Satan, he toucheth him not. But now, if Satan could tempt a godly man, and prevail so far in his temptation, as to make his faith fail totally, then he would touch him to the purpose: but, says the text, "He keeps himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not:" and therefore his faith cannot fail totally, a regenerate man's faith cannot fail totally. And ye know what is said, in that viith of Matthew at the 24th and 25th verses, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which hath built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not, because it was founded upon a rock." Now every believer is founded upon a rock, Christ, and therefore though the rain descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and temptations be never so great, he cannot fail totally, because he is built upon a rock. In the xiiith of Matthew, ye know it is made the property of the false ground that in the time of temptation it fell away: now if the good ground, a regenerate man, should fall away in the time of temptation; what difference were there between the false

ground, and the good ground? Plainly therefore, the Scripture holds forth this truth unto us, that a regenerate man, a believer, though his faith may fail much, yet it does not fail totally in time of temptation. And thus Peter's faith failed, and thus it failed not: in regard of the exercise, and acting of his faith it did fail; but in regard of the grace itself, faith itself, so it failed not: and so it is, and may be with others of the saints also.

Secondly: If the faith of a believer do only fall in regard of the acting, exercise, and working thereof, what great inconvenience is there or evil in the failing of his faith?

Much, my beloved, very much: for though that faith fail only in regard of the acting, exercise, and working, he does lose an opportunity of glorifying God. It is said of Abraham, that he believed and gave glory to God. Faith gives glory to God: it glorifies his power, his mercy, his faithfulness, and his wisdom; not faith in the habit, but faith in the exercise of it, glorifies God: and so much as a man's faith does fail, in the acting, working, and exercise of it, so much he loseth an opportunity of glorifying God.

Moreover, he loses his own comfort. Faith is a comforting grace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." And in the xvth to the Romans, and the 13th verse, ye find, that joy and peace grows upon faith: "Now the God of hope, fill ye with joy and peace in believing." So much as a man does believe, so much joy and peace: if a man fail in the exercise of his faith, he does lose his comforts.

Yea, hereby also, he does lose his present prize. A Christian hath a prize in this life; he hath a two-fold crown: a crown of glory in the world to come; and a present crown. And therefore says the Lord unto the Church of Philadelphia, "Hold fast that which thou hast, lest another take thy crown." Now if a man do fail in the exercise of his faith, he does lose much of his present prize. Ye know how it was with Moses and Aaron, ye read of it in the xxth chapter of Numbers, and the 12th verse. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, because ye believe me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel; therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have promised them." They were shut out of the land of Canaan for not believing. But Moses and Aaron did not lose the

grace of faith, it was only failing in the exercise of faith; their failing was not in the grace itself, but only they failed in the exercise of their faith, and they were shut out of Canaan for it. And Moses besought the Lord earnestly in prayer, that he would reverse this threatening, and it might not be; he was shut out of Canaan, merely for failing in the exercise of his faith. Oh! what an evil thing is it then, for a Christian to fail in his faith, though it be no more than in the exercise of his faith.

Further, in this failing of one's faith, though but in the exercise of it; a Christian does lose much of the benefit, and sweetness of the mercy promised. Look as it is with a wicked man, in regard of the judgment threatened; so with a godly man in regard of the mercy promised. Now take a wicked man, and let the threatening of God be fulfilled before him upon others, upon himself; he profits not by God's judgments. Why? because that he does not exercise faith concerning the threatening; and so when the judgment comes, he profits not by God's dealing, by God's judgment, he loses the benefit of God's dispensations that way. So I say with a godly man: let the promise be fulfilled, and possibly he does not find the sweetness, or the benefit of the mercy promised when the promise is fulfilled. Why? because he does not exercise faith in the promise itself. When as the Lord gave manna, Moses had the sweetness of it, why? because he exercised faith about it! but the children of Israel, they made a tush of it, a light matter of it: why? because they looked upon it in a way of sense, and did not take it in a way of believing, and so they lost the benefit, and sweetness of the mercy promised. Beloved, it is no small matter this, for to lose the benefit and sweetness of the mercy promised: that a Christian loses by failing in his faith in regard of the exercise of it; and therefore certainly it is a very evil thing: though their faith fail not in regard of the grace itself, yet if it fail in regard of the work, and the exercise of it, it is a very evil thing, and much inconvenience comes unto the saints thereby.

Thirdly, whereby may it appear, that Satan's great design is upon our faith in the time of temptation?

He does tempt most unto that sin which is the greatest: and the sin against the gospel is the greatest sin. Satan's

great design is to hinder the work of Christ, the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of the saints; to counter-work the Spirit of God. Satan does tempt that he may tempt: and the greatest temptation usually comes in the rear, comes at the last. Satan does tempt a man to break the law; but he hath a further reach in that: for he tempts a man to break the law, that so he may tempt him afterwards to sin against the gospel: he lies in ambush in one temptation, for to draw to another. When Satan tempted our first parents Adam and Eve, he tempted like a serpent, in form of a serpent: and so now too, he comes, and he winds about us in his temptation; but his sting is in the tail, and at the latter end. And thus ye see it was in the temptation of our Saviour Christ, his great design was upon Christ's faith: in the ivth of Matthew, ye know he hath three temptations there: and says he, in the two first temptations, "If thou be the Son of God?" and, "If thou be the Son of God?" and in the last temptation: "All this will I give the, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." He tempted him to blasphemy, and atheism; and what greater unbelief? so it is with the saints also: Satan, comes and he tempts them to sourness, frowardness, and passion in their families, but he hath a further reach upon that distemper: for, says he, I will tempt this man or woman to passion, and frowardness, and when he hath been froward, and passionate, then I will tempt him to be doubting whether he be the child of God or no: first I will tempt this man for to break the law, and when he hath broken the law, then will I tempt him to sin against the gospel, then will I strike at his faith: his great design still is upon your faith in all his temptations.

But you will say, Why is Satan's great design upon our faith in time of temptation?

He is the great robber, or thief: and if he can, he will be sure to spoil a man of that which is the best. Now faith is more precious than gold; the *trial* of your faith is, faith is the gift of God: and therefore if he can get any thing from a man, he will get that which is God's gift. He is the great hinderer of all good, of every good work; and he will especially labour to hinder that work which is the work of God in a special manner: and this is the work of God, that ye believe in his Son. Satan knows, that faith is the most

called; and the anchor of faith. If ye be in a storm at sea; faith is your anchor: If ye be in danger at land, before enemies, faith is your shield. If that a man's faith fail, his duties fail, his heart fails, and all fails. He knows well enough, that he shall soon make us suffer shipwreck, if he can but weaken faith, and therefore his great design is upon our faith. He knows, that faith is most prejudicial to himself; for "by faith we overcome the world; whom resist, steadfast in the faith; and by faith we quench the fiery darts of the devil." Now then, says Satan, does faith quench my fiery darts? then will I labour to quench faith if I can. The devil does labour always to present himself in Christ's clothes unto a soul, as an angel of light: and he does labour to present Christ in his own clothes, as an angel of darkness. When as he is a liar himself, he does labour to make the soul put the lie upon Christ, and upon the Spirit. The Spirit of God, that comes and testifies unto a man or woman, thou art the child of God: Satan says, no. When a man therefore does say, he is not the child of God; the language of his action is, he gives the lie unto the Spirit, and he says that Satan speaks true: so here he makes Christ and the Spirit of Christ a liar by his unbelief; and he makes the devil to speak true. Now this is Satan's great design, and therefore in all his temptations, still he strikes at the faith of the saints, labours to weaken their faith; his great design is upon their faith.

In the fourth place, how does Satan weaken our faith in time of temptation? What are those strokes that Satan gives unto our faith? and how shall we be able to bear them off.

In the general, Satan does sometimes labour to weaken our faith, by drawing us from the means of faith. Take the wood away from the fire, it will soon lose its heat, if not put out. And if a man be but drawn away from the means of faith; the means drawn from him, or he from the means by his own default, his faith will be soon weakened. This Satan labours to do sometimes.

Sometimes, again, he raises up mountains of difficulties; and discouragements in the way of a Christian's obedience; and so labours to wound his faith. Throw water upon the fire, it will soon be out.

But that I may speak the more fully unto this great question, the answer whereof is of concernment every day amongst you.

Ye know there are three acts of faith: there is the faith of reliance; whereby a soul does rely upon God in Christ. There is the faith of assurance; whereby a man is persuaded of God's love towards him, and his love to God, and that he is the child of God. And there is the faith of acknowledgment; whereby a man does own, and acknowledge the cause, and truth of Christ. I shall now spend some time, and shew ye how Satan strikes at all these faiths: and withal labour to shew you, how we may bear off his blows, that so we may stand in the time of temptation, and our faith may not fail.

First, For the faith of reliance: Satan does sometimes strike at the faith of reliance in the saints, by hiding from them their former experiences of God's gracious dealing with them. So long as a man hath the sight, and view of his experiences of God's gracious dealing with him before, he does rely on God, and he says, I will for ever rest upon God, and rely upon God in Christ, for thus and thus he hath dealt with me heretofore. Now therefore, Satan does labour in the time of temptation, to hide the experiences of the saints from them, and so does strike at their faith, and labours to make their faith fail.

But then, how should we bear off this blow?

Thus: Take heed that ye never rest upon the promise barely, or only because of your experience; but rather deal with your experience because of the promise. It is a good thing for a man to come up to the promise by the ladder of experience: but it is better for a man to go down to the promise by his experience. And if ye look into the cvith Psalm, ye shall find, that when a man does rest upon the promise, barely by reason of his experience, his faith will soon fail. "The waters covered their enemies" (at the 11th verse, it is spoken of the Israelites when they came through the Red Sea) "there was not one of them left." Verse the 12th. "Then believed they his words." Mark now, because of their experience, now they believed God's word, now they believed his promise by reason of their experience; "Then believed they his words, they sang his praise." But what became of

this: read the next words: "They soon forgat his works, they waited not for his counsel." So that I say, take heed that ye do not rest upon the promise barely, and only because of your experience, for if your experience be but out of the way a little, then your heart will fail, and your faith fail presently.

Secondly, Take heed that ye never mourn for any evil, no not for sin itself, so as to be unthankful for, or unmindful of former mercies. We are very apt to this, and Satan he comes, and tempts, and says unto a poor soul, Are you speaking of former mercies, or blessings to be thankful for them? That is a good work for others, but as for you, you have committed such a sin, and it is your duty now to mourn for your sin committed, look you to that, to be humbled; apply yourself to that work: and so when he hath gotten a man's heart fixed upon that work in opposition to thankfulness for former mercies received, the soul loses the sight of his experience, and so his faith fails in the time of temptation. Wherefore my exhortation is, that you may avoid this blow, and this stroke. Never mourn, no not for sin committed; but so as still to be thankful for grace received, otherwise your experience will go out of sight, and then your faith fails you.

Again, thirdly, Satan does sometimes strike at the faith of reliance, labours to weaken the faith of the saint's reliance, by sundering or severing their souls from the promise. So long as a man hath the sight of the promise, and the promise is by him; a gracious heart says, I will for ever trust in God, and rely upon God in Christ, for thus and thus hath God spoken, and thus and thus saith the promise to me. But now, if the promise be gone, then a man's reliance fails. Satan therefore, in the time of temptation, labours to take away the promise; scaring the soul, or cogging the soul from the promise; this he does many ways, but sometimes he speaks out thus; What! do you meddle with the promise? the promise does not belong to you, the threatening belongs to you; you have sinned so and so, and the threatening belongs to you, but the promise does not belong to you: and if he can but get the soul to believe this, then his faith fails.

Oh! but, how should we bear off this blow in time of temptation? for I confess thus, by this temptation does Satan strike at my faith, and labours to make my faith to fail.

In this case, let a man's heart speak thus:

First: If the Lord do command me to believe, then the promise belongs to me, for I cannot believe unless I apply the promise: now in this time, at this very time of my temptation, the Lord does command me to believe, else it were no sin not to believe; it is a sin for me not to believe, now therefore the Lord commands me to believe; but believe I cannot unless I apply the promise, therefore God would have me to apply the promise, therefore the promise does belong to me, and I may apply it.

Again, secondly, let the heart speak thus: if the Lord does give out a threatening that it may not be fulfilled; and he does give out a promise that it may be fulfilled: if the very applying of the threatening, makes the threatening not to belong to me; and the very applying of the promise, makes the promise to belong to me; then the threatening does not belong to me, for I have applied it; and the promise does belong to me, for I have applied it: oh! I remember how my soul hath lien trembling before the threatening, the Lord knows I have often applied the threatening: but now this is true, that the very applying of the threatening, makes the threatening not to belong to a man; and the very applying of the promise, makes the promise to belong to a man; and therefore, Satan, the threatening belongs not unto me, but the promise does.

But then again, thirdly, let him say thus: If I be more godly now, than I was when Satan told me, that the threatening did not belong to me, and the promise did belong to me, then there is no reason for this temptation. When I went on in a way of sin, then Satan told me, that the threatening did not belong to me; and then he told me, the promise did belong to me: oh! but now I am more godly than I was then, I have more of Christ than I had then I am sure, and therefore Satan, didst thou tell me, that the promise did belong to me then? therefore it belongs much more to me now. Thou toldest me therefore when I went on in a way of sin, the threatening did not belong to me: now then the threatening does less belong to me, for now I am more godly than I was then.

But above all things, remember that of the command to believe. Luther was a man that laboured under great temp-

tations: and being once sorely tempted, and the tears trickling down his cheeks; says he, My friend, my spiritual father, came unto me, and said, O my son? why dost thou mourn? dost thou not know that God hath commanded thee to believe? When, says Luther, I heard that word, command, that God hath commanded me to believe; it prevailed more with my heart, than all that was said, or thought on before. So say I now unto ye, does Satan come with this temptation, and tell thee, the promise does not belong to thee? answer, Aye, but the Lord hath commanded me to believe, Satan, God hath commanded me to believe, it is my duty at this time to believe; but I cannot believe unless I apply the promise, therefore I may go by commission from God unto the promise, and the promise does belong to me. Thus, give in these answers, so shall ye be able to stand, and to rely upon God, and your faith of reliance shall not fail. This is the first thing, the faith of reliance.

Secondly, How does Satan strike or labour to weaken the faith of assurance, the assurance of God's people?

Much may be said here, it is a large field; I shall only gather up some few things, and present them to you.

First, Sometimes Satan does labour to weaken the assurance of the saints, by telling them that they have no faith. Assurance is the flower of faith, it grows upon faith; but you have no faith, says Satan, and therefore your assurance is naught. But how unreasonable is this temptation! for observe I pray, in what rounds Satan goes: he tempts us to believe that we have no faith, because we have no assurance; and he tempts us again, to believe we have no assurance, because we have no faith. For answer hereunto, I shall only turn unto that ivth to the Romans: It is said of Abraham, at the 21st verse, "Being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore (at the 22nd verse,) it was imputed to him for righteousness." Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Abraham was justified by faith, it was imputed to him for righteousness: and says the apostle here, it was not written for his sake, but for us also. We are justified as Abraham was, by the same faith: what faith is that? Is it

the faith of assurance? Yes! he was assured indeed, but I pray of what? He was assured that God was able to perform: he being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Abraham believed that God was able, and so relied upon God, and hereby he was justified. So it shall be with men and women now: if they be assured, and persuaded, that God is able, and so rely upon God; this is the faith that justifies. When therefore this temptation comes, answer unto Satan: Satan, thou sayest I have no assurance, because I have no faith; but I have this assurance that Abraham had, whereby he was justified, I believe God is able to help me, and so I rely upon God, and therefore, Satan, I am now justified, and stand righteous through Jesus Christ in the sight of God.

Secondly, As he does labour to weaken the faith of assurance, by telling the saints that they have no faith; so, also, by telling them that they have no obedience, that they do not profit under the means, that they are not fruitful: wherever there is true faith, there will be obedience, and men will profit under the means, and be fruitful, but you are unfruitful, and you are barren, and where is your obedience? here is no obedience, therefore no faith: so no assurance, your assurance is wrong.

Well, but how may we ward, and keep off this blow in the time of temptation, that our faith of assurance may not fail?

Truly, I answer, this blow is not to be warded off, if this be true; that ye never were obedient, never fruitful, never profited by the means of grace; this blow falls dead upon the soul, this blow is not to be warded off, this is no temptation. But now, if ye have ever been fruitful, if ye have ever been obedient, if ye have ever profited by the means of grace; though for the present ye may seem dead: yet remember what Job says, "There is hope of a tree, though it be cut down, that by the scent of waters it will flourish again." And so, there is hope of thy soul, that by the scent of the gospel waters thou mayest flourish again. But though there be no obedience in your own eye, though ye do not profit under the means in your own eye; yet your obedience may be in the eye of others: and, in time of temptation, another man's eye is a better judge than your own.

But suppose there seem to be no obedience, neither in your

own, nor in another's eye; yet the root of the matter may be in you. Ye know how it is with the fish, that are in the water, in a windy and a stormy day: ye put many fish into a pond; and in a fair, sun-shiny day, ye see them playing upon the water, upon the uppermost part of the water; but in a rainy and stormy day, ye see none of them there, but yet you say they are all there, they are in the water, they are at the bottom, though you see them not. And so, it may be, in this stormy time of temptation, your obedience and profiting is not seen, but it may be there as heretofore. Satan does never more press a child of God, to try himself by signs of grace drawn from his own conversation, than in the time of temptation. There is indeed a good use of signs drawn from our own conversation, but this is agreed upon by all, that there is no use of them in the time of temptation. And therefore says Luther: In the time of temptation, I am as if there were no law, nor no works, but only the righteousness of Christ in the world, and so I do rest upon him. Does Satan come forth, therefore, with this temptation, That you have no obedience, that you do not profit, that you are unfruitful? answer it thus: True, Satan, I confess I am very unprofitable, and therefore I will learn to profit more; I confess I am very unfruitful, and therefore I will labour to be more fruitful: but, Satan, I will not now, at this time, determine about my condition; for it may be a time of temptation: hereafter, at another time, I will come and determine about my condition, and I will look after signs, but now, at this time, it may be a time of temptation, and therefore I will forbear to wind, and draw up a conclusion, but lean myself upon God, and rest upon God at this time.

Thirdly, Sometimes Satan does labour to weaken the assurance of God's people, the faith of assurance, to make that to fail, by telling of them, that they have no faith at all, because they have no particular faith, no particular promise; for, says Satan thus: Faith and wavering, faith and doubting, do not agree; he that believeth doubteth not: but now you pray and doubt, you believe and waver; ye have no particular word for what you believe, therefore ye have no particular faith, so no faith at all, and therefore your assurance is naught.

How should we ward off this blow?

In this case, now, let a poor believer say two or three things unto his own soul.

First, Tell thy soul this: Though it pleases God, sometimes, to give out a particular word unto his people, a particular promise, in the time of affliction, or desertion (especially) or temptation; yet the Lord does not, therefore, give out a particular promise, that a man may measure his condition thereby; there is a mistake; but the Lord does therefore give out a particular word or promise, to uphold the soul in the condition: not to measure out his condition by it, but to uphold him; and therefore, though I have not a particular word or promise, I will not conclude against my faith for this.

Secondly, Tell thine own soul, that though it pleases the Lord to give out a particular word or promise sometimes; yet always he does not. Hezekiah had a particular word for his recovery; but the three children had not a particular word that they should be delivered out of the fiery furnace, yet they believed; and whether God deliver, or does not deliver, say they, we will not bow ourselves to this idolatry. So that, though God is pleased, sometimes, to give out a particular word or promise, yet always he does not, and therefore my faith may be right, Satan, though I have not a particular word now for this business.

Again, thirdly, tell thy soul this: that though God is pleased thus to indulge, and sometimes to give out a particular promise unto his people, and they have a particular faith concerning this or that business; yet there is always a waiting faith that we read of in Scripture. There is a faith of recumbency, whereby a soul leans upon God, and commits his cause unto God: and there is a waiting faith. Now therefore, Satan, though I have not a particular word, and a particular faith for this business; yet notwithstanding I have a waiting faith, I can wait upon the Lord my God, and I can rest upon Jesus Christ: and therefore, Satan, I do yet believe, and my faith is right. Tell your own soul thus; so shall you be able to stand to your faith, and shall not fall off in the time of your temptation.

Thirdly, for the faith of acknowledgment. Sometimes Satan does labour to weaken the faith of the saint's acknowledgment. He does labour either that they should deny the

truth, or not own it: either that they should deny Christ, or that they should not own him. So he laboured to make Peter's faith to fail, by denying Christ. And therefore, he comes unto a poor soul and says, if you will go on in this way, it shall cost you a prison; can you lie and rot, and die in a prison? he rattles chains in the ears of a poor believer, and so labours to scare him away from his conscience, and from his faith, and from the truth and cause of God, and the good ways of Christ:

How should we ward off this blow?

First, before the temptation comes, labour to possess your heart much, with the mercy, and privilege of suffering for the cause, truth, name, and way of Christ. To you it is given, not only to believe, but to suffer; it is a great gift: a suffering opportunity, and a suffering heart is a great gift from God. Is it not a great mercy to be conformable to Jesus Christ our Head? "For this cause (says Christ) came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth." Is it not a great mercy, to be confessed at the last day before all the world, angels and men? "He that confesses me before men, (says Christ) him will I confess before my Father," &c. Is it not a great mercy, to live and reign with Christ a thousand years? ye know that scripture; I shall not speak of the meaning of it now, but certainly, there is a great deal of glory promised there, living and reigning with Christ a thousand years: and the promise is made unto those that do acknowledge, and own the cause and truth of God, and Jesus Christ. Possess your heart much, with the privilege, and mercy, of bearing witness to the truth, the cause, and the good way of Christ before your temptation comes.

Secondly, If you would bear off the blow of this temptation; be sure that you look upon both sides of your suffering, or bearing witness to the truth, cause, or way of Christ: the dark side, and the light side; let them not be sundered. When the Lord calls for any of his people to suffer at any time for him, he does give them more strength than before, and he does give them more comfort and consolation, than they had before. Now Satan, comes forth and holds the suffering, he makes mention of the suffering; but he hides the strength, and the consolation. Either Satan holds forth the suffering alone; or else, if he do mention any strength, or

comfort that a gracious soul shall have in the suffering, it is but the same strength that he hath now, he does not speak of the strength he shall have then, and the great consolation that he shall have then when the suffering comes: and so these being parted, the suffering, and the consolation being parted, now our faith fails. Whenever therefore this temptation does come upon you, answer thus: Satan, here thou bringest the suffering before me, and causest that to come before me; but thou dost not tell me of the strength I shall have, and of the consolation I shall receive; Satan, I shall not have the strength I have now, nor the consolation I have now, but I shall have more strength then, when the suffering comes, and I shall have more consolation, when as the affliction comes than I had before. Keep these together, do not look only upon the one side of your suffering, and witness-bearing; but look upon both sides together, and thus you shall be able to stand, and ride out the storm of this temptation.

But you will say, We have heard of the several blows that Satan gives unto our faith: unto the faith of reliance, unto the faith of assurance, and unto the faith of acknowledgement; how he labours to weaken all these our faiths, and how we should bear off all these blows: but there may be yet some temptation, possibly, that does not fall within the compass of these temptations: these directions are pointed against these particular temptations; but I have other temptations that does not fall within the compass of these, whereby Satan labours to weaken my faith, and to make my faith to fail: what general rules and directions may be given, by which a man should so walk, as that Satan may not make his faith to fail in the time of his temptation?

I answer, first: Before your temptation comes, while you are upon even ground; study, and look much into the Scripture, and into every corner, and nook thereof, as I may so speak, laying, and treasuring up promises and words suitable to every condition. Let the word of the Lord dwell in you richly; that so when a temptation comes, ye may have a word suitable at hand, and this will help ye to bear off the strength of the temptation when it comes.

Secondly, Either a particular word and promise does come unto ye, or it does not, in the time of your temptation.

If it do come unto ye, take heed that ye do not measure yourselves, or your condition, by the warmth, and life, and enlargement of your heart, which ye have at the coming in of the word. And if a particular word or scripture, and promise do not come unto you in the time of your temptation; do not measure yourselves, and your condition, by the straitness, and deadness of your heart which you have at that time when a particular word does not come.

Thirdly, If temptation come, Look much unto the infirmities of Jesus Christ: not the sinful infirmities, for so he had none, but he had many other infirmities. And ye know what the spouse in the time of desertion says, in the book of the Canticles, "His left hand is under my head, and with his right hand he does embrace me." The right hand, is a hand of power; and the left hand, is a hand of weakness: and in the the time of desertion, and temptation, it is a great relief to a poor soul, to consider the infirmities of Jesus Christ; his left hand is under our head then. As when a man is enlarged in heart, it is good to consider of Christ's example, that so he may be humbled under his enlargement: so when a man is in desertion, or temptation, it is good for to think of Christ's infirmities, that so he may not be overwhelmed, or cast down too much.

Fourthly, If temptation do come, be sure of this, that ye do not conclude it is no temptation. Satan tempts, and then he tempts a man to think it is no temptation. So long as a poor soul thinks it is but a temptation, his heart is borne up with comfort, and he says, It is but a temptation, and it will be over shortly, and the Lord Jesus Christ will pity me, for it is but a temptation, and so his heart is borne up with comfort, waiting upon God: but if the devil can get a man so far, as to make him think it is no temptation, but worse than a temptation; then his heart fails, and his faith fails. Therefore, I beseech ye, if a temptation come, do not conclude it is no temptation, but say, oh! it may be it is a temptation, and therefore, I will wait on God.

Fifthly, If temptation come, remember thine own soul of the ways of God with thee. God's ways, ye know, are in the deep, and his footsteps are not known; but as the heavens are greater than the earth, so are God's ways of mercy beyond our ways. Now therefore, if a dark temptation do come

upon ye, and ye see no way to get out, say, Oh but, my soul, remember God's ways are infinite, and his ways are beyond our ways; and though I see no way, God hath infinite ways, he walks over mulberry-trees, and his ways have been in the deep; and so it hath been all along with my soul, and therefore, now, O my soul, wait on God.

Sixthly, If temptation come, if Satan come, do you run to Christ; and look how Satan appears to you, so do you apply the attributes of Christ to you suitable to his temptation. Does Satan set a temptation to your breast? observe what temptation it is, and take an attribute of Christ suitable to that temptation, and set it to the breast of that temptation. For example: does Satan come and tempt as a serpent? Then remember, that Jesus Christ is the brazen Serpent. Does Satan come and present himself as a roaring lion? Now remember, that Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Does Satan come and present himself as an accuser? Now remember, that the Lord Jesus Christ is an Advocate. Beloved! in the time of temptation, ye are to run to Christ, that is true; but that is not all, but you are to observe how your temptation lies, and apply that attribute of Christ to your soul which is suitable to your temptation: do this, and your faith shall not fail in time of temptation.

Seventhly, and lastly, "Above all things, take the shield of faith." Take the shield of faith, that your faith may not fail: for, the way to believe, is to believe; the way to pray, is to pray; the way to hear, is to hear; the way to receive, is to receive; the way to perform duty, is to perform duty; the way to exercise grace, is to exercise grace. When temptation therefore does come upon thee, that thy faith may not fail, now stir up thyself to this work of faith, and to believe; and if ye believe that ye shall overcome, ye shall overcome; and if ye believe that that ye shall prevail against your temptations, ye shall prevail against your temptations. And, poor soul, if thou canst rely upon Christ, and believe that thou shalt be justified, thou shalt be justified; and if thou canst by faith rely upon the promise, the promise shall belong to thee. Wherefore, stir up yourselves now to believe when temptation comes. When ye have to deal with an enemy here among men, I do not say, believe ye shall overcome your enemy, and ye shall overcome: a man may be-

lieve he shall overcome his outward enemy here in the field, and yet fall before him, and not overcome: but having to deal with this enemy, God's enemy, your father's enemy, and your enemy; believe ye shall overcome him, and ye shall overcome him.

But shall we overcome him *only* if we believe?

Whoever thou art that speakest, or thinkest thus: dost thou make an *only* of believing? I tell thee, from the Lord, It is an harder thing to believe, than to keep all the commandments: for there is something in nature towards the keeping of the ten commandments, but nothing in nature towards believing in Christ. And, poor soul, dost thou make an only of believing? thou dost not know what believing means: but I say unto thee from the Lord, Believe that thou shalt overcome, and thou shalt overcome; believe that thou shalt prevail against Satan, and thou shalt prevail against him; believe that thy sins shall be pardoned through Christ and rely upon him, and thy sins shall be pardoned. Whensoever therefore any temptation comes, oh! run to Christ, cry unto Christ, and rest upon Christ, and say, Lord, I do believe, help thou my unbelief.

Beloved in the Lord, ye have heard, that in all Satan's temptations, his great design is upon your faith, to weaken your faith: therefore, let it be all your design, in all your temptations, to strengthen your faith, and to look to your faith. Which that ye may do, think on all these things, and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON V.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."—LUKE XXII. 31, 32.

THESE words, as ye have heard, acquaint us with a great temptation that was to come down upon Christ's disciples. Concerning which ye have here, the *danger* of the temptation: and the *remedy* against it. For the danger of the temptation, I have spoken already: and now come unto this 32nd verse, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail

not." Here is something implied and something expressed. Satan's design implied, which is, and was, to weaken the faith of Christ's disciples, to make their faith to fail. And of that ye have heard already.

Now that which is expressed is; Christ's tender care of, and love unto his disciples in regard of their temptations. And this love and care of his towards his disciples under temptation, is expressed in many things. First, in the forewarning of them of a temptation coming upon them: there is his love and care, in that he told them of the temptation before it came. And then, also, he prayed for them. Yea, he prayed for them before they were tempted. Yea, and he tells them that he did pray for them that they might have assurance of his help in the time of their temptation. Great was his love and care to, and for his disciples under their temptation. And so the observation is this.

Christ's love and mercy, is never more at work for his disciples and people, than when they are most assaulted by Satan. When Satan is most busy to tempt and assault their faith, then is Christ's love and mercy most at work, to keep and defend both them and their faith. We do not read of such a prayer for Peter before. We read, indeed, that our Saviour said unto Peter; "Unto thee do I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven;" "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church:" but we do not read there, that he prayed for Peter. But here he prays, and for Peter in particular: "I have prayed for thee." Why? Because now his temptations were to be more than ordinary; and therefore Christ's love and care was drawn out and expressed in a more than ordinary way.

For the clearing of this truth unto ye, I shall labour to discover,

First, Wherein the love, care, and mercy of Christ is expressed unto his people under their temptations.

Secondly, That this love and care of his, is most expressed when they are most tempted.

Thirdly, What there is in the heart of Christ, that does thus incline him to this indulgence or mercy. And so to the application.

First, If ye ask me, wherein the love and care of Christ is expressed unto his people under their temptations? I an-

swer, first, In the ordering of their temptations. For there is no temptation befals any of his, but he measures out the temptation according to their abilities. As a wise physician does not give the same physic unto every person, but considers every one's ability; that which he gives to one, is too strong for another: he considers first the ability of his patient, and prescribes accordingly. Now, though our Saviour Christ does not direct Satan for to tempt, yet he does order him in tempting; and Satan cannot put the least drachm into any temptation, but as it is measured out by the hand of Christ. And this is that which the apostle speaks plainly, in 1 Cor. xth chapter and the 13th verse: "But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able," &c. that ye may be able to bear it. The psalmist David says: "Search me, O Lord, and prove me," Psalm cxciii. That is, says Gregory, first, O Lord, look upon my strength, and then, if I must be tempted, suffer me to be tempted according to my ability. Christ does measure out all the temptations of his people according to their abilities.

Secondly, As he does measure out their temptations according to their abilities: so he does also mortify their temptations, and weaken them as they come through his hand. Mortify them before they do come at his disciples and people, before they do come at you. And, upon this account, partly, it is said, that, "We are more than conquerors, through Christ that giveth victory." Because our enemy is overcome before he strikes, and his blow is broken as he strikes. And therefore, says the apostle, concerning our Saviour, "That he hath spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly upon the cross." All your temptations, the power and strength of them, were spoiled upon the cross. There is no temptation befals any of God's people, but it is mortified and weakened before it does come at them; the sting, teeth, and the poison being taken out.

Thirdly, He does not only thus mortify and weaken a temptation before it does come at us; but he does cause Satan so to lay his temptations, as that he may be discerned, and so overcome. Satan tempted Adam and Eve, but he tempted in a serpent, and so Adam might easily have discerned the hand of Satan in it, for Adam knew all the creatures, he gave them their names, and he knew their

natures; and he knew well enough the serpent could not speak to him; he might easily have known that the hand of Satan was in the business. And so now, though God does suffer Satan to tempt his people, yet he does cause Satan so to lay his temptation, as that the black feet of the tempter may be discovered; and when a temptation is discovered it is half overcome.

Fourthly, He doth not only thus, but the Lord Jesus Christ hath the timeing of all our temptations. Time is a great matter in the point of temptation. Should a temptation come at such or such a time, possibly God's child might be overwhelmed. I praise the Lord, says one, I did resist such a temptation; but had it fallen out at such a time, I should never have been able to have stood under it. Satan observes his tempting times, he knows that great advantage may be made unto him by this. And therefore when Christ was an hungry, he tempted him to turn stones into bread: observed his time. And as Satan does observe his time to tempt, so our Lord and Saviour Christ does set him his time, and the time of his temptations is in the hand of Christ. And therefore, if ye look into the xxth chapter of the Revelation, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd verses, ye shall find to this purpose thus: "I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand: and he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that, he must be loosed a little season." Mark, the Lord Jesus Christ hath not only the tempter in a chain, that he can go no further than he gives him leave to go; but his hand also is in the hand of Christ, and Christ hath an eye to the time of his temptation, a special eye upon the time of our temptation, and this argues much of his care and love.

Fifthly, He hath not only the timeing of our temptations, but he does also sanctify our temptations, and does make them blessed means of our sanctification. And therefore says Paul, "I received the messenger Satan for to buffet me, that I might not be exalted." Twice he hath that: "That he might not be exalted out of measure." But for this I

need go no further than the instance of Peter. Before Peter was tempted, what abundance of carnal confidence was there in Peter! "Lord (says he) though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." But now I pray look upon him after his temptation, and you shall see how this carnal confidence was laid down; for our Saviour says unto him, "Peter, lovest thou me more than these? Lord (says he) thou knowest I love thee;" but not a word of the comparative, "more than these:" he had left comparing now, having been under temptation, and having fallen, his carnal confidence was gone, and he does not say now, "Lord, though all men forsake thee, yet will not I;" the comparison is left out now; he answers to the other part, but not a word to that. So that I say, If the Lord Jesus Christ do measure out all our temptations for us, and mortify them before they come at us; and does cause Satan to lay them as we may most easily discover them; and if the Lord Christ does time our temptations for us, and sanctify them unto us: then certainly there is much of Christ's love and mercy at work for his people under their temptations.

Secondly, If ye ask me yet further, Wherein is the love of Christ expressed, or drawn out unto his people under their temptations? I answer, it is seen and expressed in this: in teaching of them in and by their temptations. Tempting times are teaching times unto God's people: the school of temptation is a great school. Luther said, that the temptations of Satan were the embracings of Christ; meaning that then Christ did embrace his people most, and discover most of his love unto them. Three things, he said, there were that made a preacher: meditation, prayer and temptation. And indeed when or where does God or Christ reveal himself more fully unto his people, than in the times of their temptations? It is said that at Massah and Meribah, the waters of strife and of temptation, there the Lord gave Israel his statutes. How many experiences do God's people get in, and by their temptations? Tempting times are teaching times, and Christ teaches his people by their temptations. Satan's buffetings are the saints' schoolings.

Yea, thirdly, He does not only teach his people, but he does also bear up and uphold their hearts with new supplies of his grace and Spirit in the times of their temptations.

Christ does not suffer his people to go into new temptations with old strength; but as a new temptation does come from Satan, so new supplies of grace and strength do come from Christ. Says David, in the xcivth Psalm and the 18th verse, "When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." He does not say thus, When my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up: but, "When I said, My foot slippeth;" when I thought I was quite rejected, cast off, and forsaken; "When I said, My foot slippeth; then thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." As new temptations do come in, so new strength comes in.

Yea, and supplies of grace in proportion to our temptations. "My grace is sufficient for thee," says the Lord to Paul: My grace is fit for thee.

Yea, he does not only give out proportionable strength, but an overplus of strength. As the woman that had oil given her; not enough barely to pay her debt, but an overplus to live on the rest. So God's people in the time of their temptations, have not only strength given them to stand out against their temptations, but an overplus to live on the rest.

Yea, and they have not only incomes of assisting grace, but of accepting grace too; more accepting grace. God doth and will then accept lesser than at another time. Though the prayer be weak and the faith low, yet, says the Lord, It is the time of temptation with this my poor servant, and therefore I will take the duty, though it be never so little, because it is the time of temptation; it is a time of darkness, and a time of sadness. Ye know what our Saviour said unto Thomas: "Reach hither thine hand, and put it into my side." Come, Thomas, if thou wilt not believe without it, I will take thy faith even upon these terms, for I know it is a time of temptation with thee. What grace, what love and mercy is here!

Yea, fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ does not only come in thus, with supplies of grace and strength in the times of temptation; but he does give his people an ease and a remedy, a breathing time under their temptations, though they be never so sad and never so great. Indeed Job said that God was his enemy, and would not suffer him to swallow his spittle, he followed him so close; but the good man

was mistaken much, for at the same time, the time of his temptation, he could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and he could bless the Lord: he had his breathing time in the midst of all. When David was persecuted by Saul, he was under temptation; for, as the devil casts some men into prison, so the devil persecutes in wicked men: yet David had his breathing time now and then; Saul given into his hands, as a pledge of that full deliverance that David should have afterwards. And this is no other than that which the apostle speaks of, in that same 1st of the Corinthians, the xth chapter at the 13th verse, "Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape:" make an outlet, so the word is; he will make an outlet. Though the smoke be very offensive, yet there shall be always some window open for to let it out, or some door open for a poor tempted soul to go out at: still an outlet, some breathing time in the midst of these temptations.

Fifthly, and lastly. As the Lord Jesus Christ liveth for ever to make intercession for us; So he doth it especially when his people are under temptation; then he prays for them, and then especially. I will not determine, whether Christ now in heaven, does intercede vocally, or really: but when Satan lies hard upon a poor tempted soul, and fetches blood from it, then does the Lord Jesus step in unto his Father, and present his wounds, and his blood, and says unto his Father, O Father, I have prayed unto thee, that this poor man or woman, may not fail in the time of temptation. Thus it was with Peter here; I have prayed for thee: and yet this was not the time of his full intercession, when he was here on earth. There are two parts of Christ's priestly office: satisfaction, and intercession. The proper place for him to make satisfaction for sin, was here on earth: and in heaven, the holy of holiest, he does make intercession; there he does do it fully, but he could not forbear while he was here on earth; but he says unto Peter, I have prayed for thee. Though my great work in heaven be to intercede, and my special work here on earth be to satisfy: yet notwithstanding, I have prayed for thee already Peter. And the Lord Jesus Christ was heard in all that he prayed for. Now then, if the Lord Christ doth in-

tercede here on earth for his poor tempted servants, and was heard here; how much more, when his disciples are tempted, does he intercede, and pray for them in heaven, and is heard there. Satan may come running in upon you with his temptation: but when Satan runs in upon you with his temptation, Christ runs into the presence of God the Father, and spreads his blood, and his satisfaction for you, and there he says unto the Father, Father, I have prayed that this man or woman's faith may not fail. Oh! what grace, and mercy, and love is here! Thus in all these respects, and many others that I might mention, is the love of Christ, and his mercy drawn out unto his people, in the time of their temptation.

Well, But how may it appear, that Christ's mercy is most at work, when his people are most assaulted by Satan? Christ deals by his, as God the Father did deal by him. Now ye shall find, that God's love was never more towards Christ, than when Christ was under temptation. When Christ came to die, Satan was very busy; it is called, The hour of darkness: so busy was Satan with all his malice against him: yet then was the Father's love towards Christ, then especially; for says Christ, "Therefore does the Father love me, because I lay down my life." If the Father did therefore love him, because he laid down his life, then his love was most at work towards Christ when this hour of darkness was. And so I say, when your hour of darkness is, the hour of temptation; Christ's love is then most at work, because he deals by his, as the Father did deal by him.

The truth is, Christ's dealing with his disciples, was a pattern and platform of his dealing with all his people, to the end of the world. Now ye shall observe, that Christ's love was never more let out towards his disciples, than from this time, after he had said these words, "Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat." After this time they were all offended because of Christ, and they all forsook him: Peter denied him; some doubted whether he were the Messiah or no: and another would not believe his resurrection; and as sheep, they were all scattered, and shattered; great was their temptations: yet from this time, do but observe the love of Christ towards them: after this speech, then Christ preaches a most excellent and sweet sermon to them, in

the xivth, xvth, and xvith chapters of John. Then he takes water and a towel, and washes, and wipes his disciples' feet. Then he appoints the Lord's Supper. Then he spends a whole chapter, the xviith of John, in prayer for them: makes a most excellent, and sweet prayer for them. Then he calls them his friends: Ye are no longer my servants, but my friends: yea, his children: yea his little children. Never was his love more drawn out, or expressed towards them, than after this time; and, I say, this was a pattern and a platform of his dealing, with all his people unto the end of the world. And therefore, though Christ do suffer his own people to be tempted, yet his love and mercy is never more at work than when they are most assaulted by Satan.

Thirdly, you will say, What is there in the heart of Jesus Christ, that does incline him to this indulgence toward his people, that his love and mercy is then most at work, when they are most assaulted by Satan?

My beloved, there is the quintessence of all the excellency of loving relations in Jesus Christ: a father, a mother, a brother, a friend. He is the Everlasting Father. And his soul was in travail, says the prophet. He is not ashamed to call you his brethren. And he is a Friend: "I call you my friends." Now though parents be tender of their children at all times, yet especially when they are sick; then there is a chair of love stands by the child's bed-side. And so, though Christ be always tender of his people, yet then especially, when their souls are sick, and labour under temptation. There is the greatest pity in Christ that can be, the most pitiful disposition in Christ; which is always laid out where he sees a fit object for it. Pray what is the object of pity? The object of pity, is one whom ye love in misery. If ye see a man in misery, yet if ye do not love him, ye do not pity him: if ye see a man whom ye love, yet if ye do not see him in misery, ye do not pity him; ye love him but ye do not pity him: but a person whom ye love in misery is the object of pity. Now all the saints and people of God are the beloved of Christ; and when they are in temptation, that is their greatest misery; and therefore, when they are most tempted, then is the love and mercy of Christ drawn out unto them especially.

Besides, the Lord Jesus Christ hath a great interest and

share in every believer, a share going in every believer. As the member hath an interest and share in the head, so the head hath also in every member. "Thine they were (says Christ) and thou gavest them me." Christ hath a special and great interest in all his people, and he will not lose his interest. The truth is, when Satan does assault a believer, he does rather strike at Christ, than at the believer. And therefore, says Gregory well, The devil, in tempting Job, did not so much strike at Job, as at God; for the Lord had said that Job was an upright man: and now the devil would go about to make Job an hypocrite; so that the devil would fain have made God a liar; and he did not so much strike at Job, as at God's testimony of Job: he did strike at God. And so now, in all the temptations of the saints, he strikes at Christ, and they bear those temptations because of Christ. Let a man go on in a wicked and ungodly way, Satan will not vex him with temptations; but let a man once become godly, and be in Christ, and then how many temptations will Satan vex him with? Now, says Christ, shall this poor soul endure all this for me, and shall not I help, shall not I assist, shall not I deliver? If a man break his arm or his leg before ye, you will pity him: but if he break his arm or his leg in your work or service, in a work that you set him about, you count yourself engaged then to help him. It is the work of Christ that the saints are about, and Christ sets them on work; and when Satan comes to tempt, it is to disturb them in the work that Christ sets them about: Now, therefore, says Christ, shall they endure all this because of me, and because of my work, and shall not I assist and defend them and help them? Surely I will. O my beloved! if ye did but know what an interest Jesus Christ hath in every believer, you would easily see the reason of this, so great tenderness in him, that his love and mercy is never more at work than when they are most assaulted by Satan.

For application.

What abundance of comfort is here unto all those that are the true disciples of Jesus Christ! you are not alone in your temptations, Christ is with you; and he is in heaven too, interceding and praying for you: he hath sent his Spirit into your hearts, to make intercession for you there; and he himself is in heaven, making intercession and praying for you

there: when you are in temptation, Christ is at prayer for you. Yea, he does not only pray for you, but his love and his mercy is most of all at work then, when you are most assaulted. Oh, what comfort is this!

But, will some say, I fear this comfort belongs not to me, because I am none of these that are Christ's true disciples; Christ prayed for Peter, because he was his disciple; and he prayed for the rest because they were his disciples: but as for me, though in profession I may be a disciple, yet really I fear I am no true disciple of Jesus Christ, and therefore I fear that he does not pray and intercede for me in the time of my temptation.

Two things for answer to this:

First, I pray consider that place in the xvith chapter of Matthew, and the 24th verse: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me (or, If any man will be my disciple; so some books have it), let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Mark, here are three properties of a true disciple. To open the words a little unto ye, that I may settle this comfort the more fully upon your hearts.

First, A true disciple does deny himself. So long as a man is in the state of nature, he is always in the circle of self, and Satan keeps him in it: but when Christ comes, he gets out of that circle, and then he denies himself. Self says, whether natural self, civil self, or sinful self, thou art now minding Christ, and the ways of Christ; but mind thy estate more, and thy name more, and thy friends and relations more, and thy health more, and thy pleasures and recreations more. Nay, says a true disciple, but I must mind Christ more, I must mind mine own soul more, I must mind mine eternity more; so he denies himself; his sinful self, and civil self, and religious self too: his self-reason, and his self-will, and his self-affection.

Secondly, He does take up his cross: a true disciple takes up his cross. It is not said, he does bear his cross with patience; there is a great deal of difference between these; bearing of a man's cross with patience, when it is laid upon him, and taking up his cross when it is laid before him. Properly a man is said to take up his cross, when there is sin laid on one side; and there is a cross, and an affliction laid

on the other side; now, either you must commit this sin, or else you must endure this cross, or affliction: Nay then, says a true disciple, rather than I will commit that sin, I will endure this affliction; and so he takes up his cross.

Thirdly, He does also follow Christ. Some there are, that having suffered for the name, and cause of Christ, they then grow proud of their sufferings, and they fall into foul miscarriages; but a true disciple of Christ, when he hath taken up the cross, he follows Christ: now properly a man is said to follow Christ, when he does do those things at Christ's command, wherein Christ does differ from others. As now a man is said to follow Luther, when he does follow him in those things wherein he differs from Calvin; a man follows Calvin, when he does follow him in those things wherein he differs from Luther. So a man is said to follow Christ, when he follows him in those things wherein he differs from others. There are some things, wherein Christ and nature do agree: nature says, That a man must do by another, as he would be dealt by himself; herein Christ and nature agree. But Christ says, "A new commandment give I unto ye, that ye love one another, as I have loved you:" here Christ differs from nature. Nature teaches a man that there is a God, and that God is to be prayed unto; and that a man is to pray for his friends: but now Christ says, "Pray for your enemies." I say, a man is properly said for to follow Christ, when he follows him in that wherein Christ differs from others. Now whosoever thou art that makes this objection, that thou art not a disciple of Jesus Christ, and therefore he does not pray for thee in the time of thy temptation; I appeal to ye: Are ye not willing to take up your cross? rather to endure that affliction, than commit this sin? do ye not set yourself to deny yourself, your pleasures, recreations, relations, and all for Christ? And do ye not desire to follow Jesus Christ in those things wherein he does differ from Anti-Christ, and from nature, and from Moses? then surely, thou art a disciple of Jesus Christ.

But besides this, our Saviour tells us in the xviith of John, that he did not only pray for those his present disciples; but, says he, "I pray for all that shall believe on me

through their word," verse the 20th. What is it to believe on Christ? To rest upon Christ for life and glory in the time of our temptation; this is to believe on Christ. Now in the time of your temptation, do not ye rest on Christ? do not ye rely on Christ? then Christ hath prayed for ye. And though thou art in such a temptation, as thou complainest, thou canst not pray, yet the Lord Jesus Christ hath prayed for thee: and he is heard in all that he prayed for.

But I fear, will some say yet, that the Lord Jesus Christ does not pray, or intercede for me in the time of my temptation, because my faith fails me; oh! my faith hath failed me in the time of temptation. Did Christ pray for me my faith would not fail, for he is heard in all that he prays for; but oh! my faith fails in time of temptation, and therefore I fear that this love and mercy of Christ is not at work for me in the time of my temptation.

For answer, first, There is a great deal of difference between the failing of your faith and the failing of your heart. Possibly your heart may fail in time of temptation, and yet not your faith. Look I pray into the lxxiiird Psalm, the 26th verse, and you shall find as much. Says the Psalmist there, "My flesh and my heart faileth." Aye, but did not his faith fail now? See what he says; his faith stands notwithstanding this: "But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Here is his faith. So that though his flesh failed, and his heart failed, yet his faith did not fail. There is a great deal of difference between a recoiling fit of a heart-failing in time of temptation, and the failing of one's faith.

Secondly, It is one thing for you to fail in your faith in your own opinion, and another thing for your faith to fail in the opinion of Jesus Christ. When Peter denied his Lord and Master, in his own opinion he could not but think that his faith failed; and yet in the opinion of Jesus Christ his faith did not fail, for Christ prayed that his faith should not fail; and it did not fail, for Christ was heard in what he prayed for.

Thirdly, There is a great deal of difference between the failing of faith, and failings that do accompany faith. The poor woman that came to Christ and touched the hem of his garment, failed very much, for she came behind him and

thought to have stolen a cure: aye, but, though there were many failings that did accompany her faith, yet her faith did not fail, for she came and touched the hem of his garment, and was cured by her faith. So I say there is a great deal of difference between the failing of faith, and the failings that do accompany faith; there may be many failings that do accompany one's faith, and yet one's faith may stand and not fail.

But yet further, whosoever you are, that say your faith fails you, and therefore you are afraid that Christ prays not for you: man or woman, did thy faith ever fail thee like Peter's? Didst thou ever deny thy Lord and Master as Peter did? and yet Christ said, "I have prayed that thy faith fail not," and he was heard in the thing that he prayed for.

Oh! but, that was but one act in Peter; but my faith doth constantly fail; Peter denied, and his faith failed in the exercise as to one act, but my faith doth constantly fail in time of temptation: I was heretofore more able to believe in the time of my temptation than now I am; my faith is failed, and it constantly fails, and therefore I fear that the Lord Christ will not pray for me in the time of my temptation.

Well, but if you be more able to rely upon mere free grace, than ye have been heretofore, then your faith is not less, but, increased rather. If you be now more able to be contented with your condition, than you were heretofore; if you can let God and Christ alone, to use his own means about you; if you can leave the events and successes of things, more unto God than you could heretofore; then your faith is not failed, but rather increased. Man or woman, if that you are able now to take those hints of a word which you could not heretofore; if your judgment be more settled in the truth; if you be more contented to suffer now for the cause, and the way of God than you were heretofore: then thy faith is not failed, but thy faith is increased rather, and so thou comest within the compass of the Lord Christ's prayer.

Oh! but yet, will some say, I have sinned greatly, very much; I have been a great sinner; and therefore I fear, that the Lord Jesus Christ will let me alone to wrestle with my temptations all alone, and will not pray and intercede for me in the time and hour of my temptation.

Well, I must yet say again to you: Hast thou sinned more than this Peter did, when he denied his Lord and Master? Yet Christ prayed for him, and his prayer took and prevailed. Have you sinned more than Jerusalem did? "Oh Jerusalem, thou that stonest the prophets," says Christ, when they put him to death. And yet if you look into the ist of the Acts, you shall find, that Christ after his resurrection, bids his disciples for to stay and wait at Jerusalem, and not stir from thence; and preach the gospel, and mercy, and free-grace in Jerusalem. Hast thou, man or woman, that makest this objection, sinned more than those did that put Christ to death? that run him into his body with a spear? that nailed him upon the cross? hast thou sinned more than these? Ye know our Lord and Saviour when he was upon the cross, he prayed for them; oh! "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." But, Lord, these are thine opposers, these are persecutors, and they persecute thee to death. Well, be it so, says Christ, I know what I do, and I know whom I pray for: "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Oh! what grace, and mercy, and love are here! Comfort, yea, comfort unto all the disciples of Jesus Christ: when ye are in temptation, the Lord Christ is at prayer for you. And remember the doctrine; never is his love and mercy more at work for ye, than when Satan is most busy about ye, to tempt ye most. What comfort is here! This was that, in part, that comforted the martyrs in the primitive times, ye read of very great comforts that the martyrs had in the primitive times, those times next after Christ: I have desired to consider, what it was especially, that bore up their hearts under all those persecutions. And Turtullian, pitches upon this as one thing: We consider, says he, the case of Peter; Satan desired to winnow him; Christ prayed for him. Here were, says Turtullian, two requests before God the Father: one was the request of Satan: and another was the request of Christ. Now the Son having more credit with God the Father than Satan, his request must needs prevail: so, says he, Satan hath desired for to tempt, and to winnow us, and persecute us; but the Lord Jesus Christ hath requested for us: there are two requests before God the Father; there is Satan's request to winnow us: and there is the Son's request praying for us: now therefore, seeing that the Son hath

more credit with God the Father than Satan, therefore are we assured that we shall be upheld, and our faith shall not fail. And so may you also. This is matter of great comfort unto all the saints.

You will say, Indeed it is matter of great comfort: but is there no duty that this truth calls for at our hands? Here is much comfort, but what is that duty that this truth calls for?

I answer, Much every way. If I be an ungodly man; what a mighty encouragement is here for to get into Jesus Christ, that I may be in the number of the true disciples. So long as a man is out of Christ, not a true disciple of Jesus Christ; Satan may come and tempt, and do what he will with him, and no Christ by to help. Satan could not hurt, or touch, or tempt Job, but he must ask leave: but Satan went to the Sabeans, and brought in them upon Job's estate, and and he did not ask leave for that, they were in his power, he ruleth in the children of disobedience. Daniel was in the lions' den, and they devoured him not, their mouths were stopped, and they could not hurt him: but when the enemies were thrown in to the lions, they cracked, and crushed their bones before they came to the ground. If a godly man, one that is a true disciple of Jesus Christ, if he be in a den, with these lions, devils, their mouths shall be stopped, they shall not swallow him. But oh! for wicked men that are not in Christ, these lions, they crush their bones, every day they crush their bones: and a wicked man may say as Saul did, "The Philistines are upon me, and God is departed from me." So a wicked man, that is not in Christ, he may cry out and say, oh! temptations are upon me, and Christ is departed from me, I have none of Christ to help me: as for the saints, and those that are true disciples of Jesus Christ, they have Christ at hand, though they fall, Christ is by for to help them up. And Christ himself measures out all their temptations, and Christ assists them, and helps them, but oh! as for me, I am all alone in my temptations, I, poor soul, am all alone in my temptations: ah! who would be a drunkard still? who would be a swearer still; who would be an unclean wanton still? who would be a liar, and a thievish servant still? let me tell ye, that while ye go on in these sins, you are out of Christ: poor soul, a swearer, a drunkard, a common liar, a sabbath breaker, a

wanton, out of Christ, and thy temptations fall heavily upon thee; the Lord knows, thou art all alone in the time of thy temptations: oh! but get into Jesus Christ, get into Jesus Christ, to be in the number of Christ's true disciples; and when thou art tempted, the Lord prays for thee; yea, and the love and mercy of Christ is never more at work for thee, than when thou art most tempted, and assaulted by Satan. What a mighty encouragement is here to all that hear the word of the Lord, to get into Jesus Christ!

But if I be godly; and all this be true: Why should I question the love of God towards me in the time of my temptation? Beloved! ye know in your experience, ye are never more apt for to question the love of Christ, than in temptation; and yet Christ's love is never more at work for you than in temptation. Oh! what an unworthy answering of Christ's love is here!

Again, If I be godly: Why should not I be contented, and quiet under all my temptations, though they be never so great? Christ prayeth for me, Christ's love is most at work now I am most assaulted, his bowels then yearn towards me.

Yea, If I be godly: Why should I not with Paul, triumph over all temptations? and make my boast of Christ, and say as he did "Now know I that nothing shall separate me from the love of God in Christ;" not principalities, nor powers, nor devils, nor temptation; for when I am most tempted, Christ is most at work in love for me.

Yea, beloved in the Lord, why should we not all warm our hearts with this love of Jesus Christ? it is a mercy that the Lord Christ will cast but an eye or a look upon a poor soul under temptation; that is a mercy: aye, but I tell ye more than so; Christ does not only cast an eye and a look upon a poor tempted soul, but his love and mercy is never more at work than when you are most assaulted and tempted by Satan: ah, what grace and heart-warming love is here!

If I be godly, again, upon this account, why should I give over so soon, and lay down my weapon in time of temptation? If a city be beleaguered, besieged, and know that help will come, they will not give over. And though I am thus besieged, and thus tempted, help will certainly come, for Christ hath prayed; why should I give over then in time of temptation?

And if these things be so, if there be so much love in the heart of Christ towards poor tempted souls: then, beloved, should we not all run to Christ in the time and hour of our temptation, run unto him by prayer?

It may be there are some that will say, If Christ pray for us in time of temptation, what need we pray?

But, I answer, pray look into this chapter, and you will find our Saviour carries it otherwise. In the text, says he, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." At the 46th verse, says he, "Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." So that, though he had said that he prayed for them, yet he calls upon them also to pray. It is good praying, my beloved, when mercy is coming: and mercy is then coming when Christ is praying; and when you are most tempted, then Christ is at prayer.

But to end all. Whatever your temptations, therefore, be, you that are the servants of God, still think ye hear Christ saying to ye, Man, woman, be of good comfort, I have prayed for you: though thy temptations be very great, I have prayed for thee: though thou canst not pray for thyself as thou wouldest, I have prayed for thee: when flesh fails, and eyes fail, and heart fails, and all fails, yet remember this, Christ prayeth for you, in the time of your temptation Christ prayeth for you: think that ye hear Christ speaking to ye in the time of your temptation, for certainly he does it as well to his disciples now, as he did to his disciples then, he does speak and say, Be of good comfort, man or woman, though thy temptations be great, yet I have prayed for thee, and thy faith shall not fail.

GRACE FOR GRACE,

OR THE

OVERFLOWINGS OF CHRIST'S FULNESS RECEIVED BY ALL SAINTS.

IN

SIX SERMONS,

PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S IN THE EAST

AND OTHER PLACES.

A. D. 1[illegible].

GRACE FOR GRACE.

SERMON I.

"And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace."
JOHN I. 16.

HERE in this chapter are two choice spirits, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist; both agreeing in this, to advance the honour of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist is brought in by John the Evangelist, giving, as you read in this first chapter, four great testimonies of Jesus Christ.

The first begins at the 15th verse: "John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This is he of whom I spake." Wherein John the Baptist doth prefer Jesus Christ above himself; both in regard of his person and regard of his office: in regard of his person, as you read in the latter end of the 15th verse, "This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me;" in regard of his office, at the 16th, the 17th and 18th verses, "And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." &c.

I confess there are learned interpreters, as Cyril and Chrysostome, that do conceive the words of my text to be the words of John the Evangelist: the 15th verse having, as they say, relation unto John's speech in the latter end of the 14th verse: "Full of grace and truth."

But Origen and others, unto whom I rather incline, think that they are the words of John the Baptist; because they are knit unto the former by the copulative *and:* "And, of his fulness have all we received, grace for grace." He, therefore, that spake the words of the former verse, in all likelihood spake these words: he that spake the words of the former verse was John the Baptist, and therefore these words being linked unto the former by the word *and*, in all likelihood are the words of John the Baptist.

The words of themselves fall into these three propositions:

First, That there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, That of this fulness we have all received.

Thirdly, That we have all received, even grace for grace.

There is a great controversy upon the latter clause, what should be meant by those words, "Even grace for grace:" but because the determination thereof falls properly within the compass of the third proposition, and will have little influence upon the first, which I intend, God willing, to speak upon at this time; therefore I pass by that controversy, and come presently unto the first proposition, which is this:

That there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ.

Fulness is here attributed, you see, unto Jesus Christ.

The word in the original πλήρωμα sometimes is taken for abundance: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," Psalm xxiv. 1. So here it is not taken, here it is too narrow; for there is not only *Plenitudo abundantiæ*, but, *Plenitudo redundantiæ;* not only a fulness of abundance, but a fulness of redundancy—an overflowing of fulness in Jesus Christ.

Sometimes the word is used for fulfilling and perfecting of a thing. So love is said to be the fulfilling of the law. So it is not taken here; for though Christ be the end of the law, yet notwithstanding, the fulness spoken of here, is that which we do receive, and that is the fulness of grace.

The word, firstly and properly, is given unto vessels that are brimful of liquor, and so metaphorically applied here unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who is brimful of grace, in whom there is no emptiness, there is no evacuity. While I speak Jesus Christ, I mean Christ as Mediator, as God-man. There is a fulness in Christ as God: that is not the fulness; so Christ is not taken here, by what is said in the verse before the text, the 14th verse: "And the Word was made flesh; and of his fulness we have all received." So that it is the fulness of Christ as Mediator: there is a fulness of grace in Christ as Mediator. I shall keep me close unto the words. The fulness is here spoken of which we are said to receive, of which we receive. We receive grace for grace: it is the fulness therefore of grace that is in Christ, that I am now speaking of.

Now the word grace, sometimes is taken for the love and

favour of God: "We are saved by grace," Eph. ii. 5: that is, we are saved through the love and mercy of God.

Sometimes this word χαρις in the original is used or put for holiness: "Singing with grace in your hearts," Col. iii. 16; that is, with holiness in your hearts.

And sometimes it is used for excellency, for gifts, or ability, as in Ephes. iv. 7, (χαρισμα *Donum, quodquis gratificatur)*, and in all these respects there is a fulness of grace in Christ.

First of all, take grace for love, and bounty, and mercy, and so there is. *Plenitudo bonitatis:* there is a fulness of love in Christ. The heart and love of Christ now in heaven, is the same toward poor sinners, toward his children, toward believers, toward men, as it was when he was upon the earth, when Christ was upon the earth.

First, There was a fulness of pardoning love in him: then he would pardon men before they did come for pardon. "Father (says Christ), Father forgive them, they know not what they do," Luke xxiii. 24. Ye count it a great act of love, where the fault is great, to forgive a man upon his acknowledgment of the fault: our Lord Christ did not stay for their acknowledgment, but whilst they were reeking in their sins he forgives: "Father, forgive them, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Yea, if you look into the gospel ye shall find, that when men were putting forth the highest acts of sin, he was putting forth the highest acts of his love. When Christ was suffering for Peter, Peter was denying Christ: Peter denying Christ, and Christ suffering for Peter. When he was upon the earth, he did not only pardon once, but he would pardon again and again: if men sinned again, he would pardon again. The disciples slept, and Christ pardoned; they slept again, and Christ pardoned again; they slept again, and Christ pardoned again. Yea, and when he had pardoned, he would not upbraid them with their former sins, or with his own mercy. After his resurrection, not a word to Peter of all his denial or of Christ's mercy. Beloved, Christ is the same in heaven, he is the same in heaven now.

Again, When Christ was upon the earth, his first and his great care was for those that were weak in grace. The first sermon that he preached, "Blessed are the poor in spirit,"

Matt. v. 3, 4, and, "Blessed are those that mourn." He doth not say, Blessed are those that have assurance of the love of God, and, Blessed are those that have the sense of his love in their hearts; but, Blessed are the poor, and Blessed are they that mourn. And when any poor doubting, trembling soul came unto him, he would not cast away their service because it was accompanied with infirmity; but he would rather pass by their infirmity because it was accompanied with some sincerity. So the woman that came behind him; so Nicodemus. And when any poor soul could not come to Christ, could not come to Christ in Christ's way, Christ would come down to him in his way. Thomas, saith he, thou sayest thou wilt not believe, unless thou thrust thy hands into my side; Thomas, thou wilt not honour me by believing unless thou seest; Thomas, thou wilt not come up to me in my way: well, I will come down to thee in thy way; come, reach hither thy fingers, and thrust thy hands into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Oh, the admirable condescension of the love of Jesus Christ! Beloved, he is the same now in heaven.

Again, When he was upon the earth, he professed that his heart, and his love, and affections were as much, if I say not more, unto one saint, as unto all his kindred that are such. "Blessed are those that keep thy commandments," Rev. xxii. 14. "Behold, say they, thy mother, and thy brother, and sister are without to speak with thee:" says he, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, sister, and mother," Matt. xii. 47—50. As if he should say, you count my kindred happy, because they are near unto me; but do you see one poor, believing, trembling, gracious soul? I tell you the soul that keeps my commandments, is as much unto me as all my kindred that are such; here is love! and I say the Lord Jesus, his heart is the same still in heaven. And therefore you shall observe, that when he was risen and came amongst his disciples, the door being shut; he comes into the room, and he says unto them, "Peace be unto you," Luke xxxiv. 36. Why, peace be unto you? the ordinary way and manner of salutation: as if he would say thus much unto them, that they should find him every way as courteous, and as loving towards them now being risen, as he was before he died

And, my beloved, if Jesus Christ should not be as gracious, and as kind after death, as before; then his disciples should be losers by his death: but he professed to them before he died, that they should not be losers, but gainers rather. When our Lord Christ was upon the earth, out of his love, he died for us; he loved us, and died for us: his love then cost him much: Now that he is in heaven he dies no more, he can love us at a cheaper rate. And shall we think, that when he was upon the earth, he would lay down his life for us; and now he is in heaven, he will not speak a good word for us? certainly, beloved, the Lord Jesus is as full of love and tender affection toward his now he is in heaven, as he was upon the earth. Take grace for love, and so there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ. That is the first.

Secondly, Take grace for holiness, and so there is *plenitudo sanctitatis*, a fulness of holiness in Jesus Christ. There are three things in the old Testament that were very holy, the law, the high priest, and the temple.

As for the ceremonial law, though it was very holy; yet in regard of the spiritual command of the gospel, and Christ; the ceremonials of the law, in the book of the Hebrews, is called the carnal command. Heb. vii. 16.

And as for the high priest, though he had holiness written upon his forehead; yet therein he was but a type of Christ. And saith the apostle, in the book of Hebrews vii. 27; "The high priest then when he offered for others' sins, he offered first for his own sins," but our High Priest not so.

And as for the temple, it was indeed very holy, the Jews rested much thereupon; and therefore they cried thrice, The temple, the temple, the temple of the Lord, Jer. vii. 4. But now if you look into the vith chapter of Isaiah, you shall find that our Lord Christ is there upon the temple; and whereas they cried three times for the temple, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord. Three times this is echoed concerning Christ, Holy, holy, holy. At the first verse, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple;" his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims, each had six wings, with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly, and one cried unto

another, and said, Holy, holy, holy. As if he should say: you that are the Jews, you cry out of the temple; the temple, the temple, the temple. But here is holiness, here is one that is holy, holy, holy, holy. That this is to be understood of Christ, you may see plainly, by comparing it with the ivth chapter of the Revelation, at the 2nd verse: "Immediately I was in the spirit, : and behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne," as it is said in Isaiah, one sat on the throne. "And he that sat was to look upon as a jasper, and a sardine stone. And there was a rainbow round about the throne. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and there were four and twenty elders, and four living creatures." The description of the gospel church. And, saith he, at the 8th verse, "The four beasts had each of them six wings about them, and they were full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy. Mark, the very same expression that you have there in Isaiah: he doth not say thus, righteous, righteous, righteous; just, just, just; but holy, holy, holy. Is there not then a fulness of holiness in Jesus Christ?

I will give you but two demonstrations of it.

If there were not a fulness of holiness in Jesus Christ, how is it possible that God and man could be brought so near together, that were so far asunder? Every man naturally is full of sin: You say of the beggar, he is full of vermin, why? because he goes to this door, to that door, and to another door, and he scatters his vermin wherever he comes, and the man knows it not: surely therefore, the man is full of vermin.

And so a man naturally, dropping, and scattering his sins and not knowing of it, it argues he is full of sin. God, he is full of holiness: whose eyes cannot endure to behold iniquity: yet when men are converted and drawn to God, they are brought near unto him: they are the apple of his eye: their names are written in the palm of his hand. That is, says Luther, the hand is an instrument of work; and when the names of the saints are said to be written in the palm of God's hand, it notes thus much, says he, That God in all his works hath an eye to his children; God in all the works of his hands hath an eye to his children. They are the friends of God, and God is their friend: when a man is my friend, not

only his purse is my friend, or his estate is my friend, or his tongue is my friend, or his hand is my friend; but his sword is my friend: so when God is a friend to any, not only his mercy is his friend, but the sword of God is his friend, the very wrath of God is as a friend to his children: such a great friendship there is between God and his people, so near they are brought to one another. Well, but how are they brought thus near! they are brought near by Jesus Christ: in whom we have a manuduction, a leading by the hand, says the apostle, as the word carries it, unto God the Father. But now, could men so full of sin, and God so full of grace and holiness be brought so near together by Jesus Christ, if there were not an infinite fulness of holiness in Jesus Christ?

Again, if there were not this fulness of holiness in Christ, how should he be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows? The saints themselves are said to be full of grace. The church called, "The fulness of Christ that filleth all in all:" Ephesians ist chapter 23rd verse. Stephen, Mary, others; full of the Holy Ghost: surely therefore, if so much of the ointment run down upon Christ's members, there must be a great anointing upon Christ himself: surely, there must be an infinite holiness in Christ, that must serve us all: and of his fulness we have all received, we have all received.

You will say, But if the saints be full of grace and holiness, how is this the property of Christ?

Yes, I answer, for though the saints be full of grace, and holiness; yet their fulness is but a fulness of sufficiency, mark, whereby they are made able to this or that work whereunto they are appointed: but the fulness of Christ is a fulness of efficiency, that filleth all in all. And therefore it is said in this chapter, "The law was given by Moses," John i. 17, but grace, (grace and truth you read it,) "grace and truth came by Christ:" the word will bear it, but grace and truth were made by Christ: Christ is our grace maker.

The fulness that is in the saints, is but a particular fulness.

The fulness that is in Christ, is an universal fulness. Therefore says the apostle, "It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell," Col i. 19. All fulness.

The fulness that is in the saints, is such a fulness as does ebb and flow; as the haven is said to be full of

water, yet sometimes it is empty: but there is a dwelling fulness in the sea: so there is a dwelling fulness in Jesus Christ: and therefore, says the apostle, it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell: oh! it is a dwelling fulness that is in Jesus Christ.

Our righteousness as we are distinct, or abstracted from Christ, it is but a fading righteousness; as the morning dew. "Our righteousness (says Hosea) is as the morning dew," Hosea vi. 4. in regard of its fading: but the holiness and righteousness of Christ, in the cxth Psalm, is called "The dew of the morning:" not in regard of its fading nature, but in regard of its muchness, in regard of its multitude, because it makes all dewy. So then it is a filled fulness: it is a dwelling fulness: it is a glorious fulness, a fulness beyond all expressions. Thus, take grace for holiness, and so also there is *Plenitudo sanctitatis* in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Take grace for gifts, or for ability, and excellency: and so there is, *Plenitudo excellentiæ*, a fulness of excellency in Jesus Christ. Therefore saith the apostle, "He is able to save to the uttermost," Heb. vii. 25; he is able to save to all perfection, those that do come unto him: he is able to save to the utmost; though thou hast sinned to the utmost, he is able to save to the utmost.

Would you have a proof of his kingly fulness? for he is both King, Priest, and Prophet. Look then I pray into the ist chapter of the Hebrews, at the 3rd verse. He is called the brightness of his Father's glory: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power; when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: he is made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they: for unto which of the angels said he at any time" &c. But, at the 8th verse, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Here is the fulness of his kingly office.

Would you have a proof of his prophetical fulness? look into this chapter where the text lies, and it is said, at the next verse, the 17th verse, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ: no man hath seen

God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Ye all count Moses a great prophet; so he was: but Jesus Christ was above him in two or three things here.

Moses gave the law: but grace came by Jesus Christ; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Moses never saw God, he saw his back parts: Christ hath seen him: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son," Moses was but a servant, "the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." None so fit to declare the mind of God, which is the work of a prophet, as he which hath lien in the bosom of God the Father.

Would you have a proof of his priestly fulness? Pray look into the xvith of John; consider it duly: saith he, "I will send the Comforter (at the 7th verse), and he shall convince the world of sin, and of righteousness (at the xth verse); because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." Mark those words: "I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." As if he should say thus: You are indebted to God the Father through your transgressions; I am become your Surety, and now I am ready to be cast into prison for your debt: the grave is to take hold upon me, I am to lie by it for your sin, for your debt: but, saith he now, I will rise out of the grave, I will come forth of prison, I will go to God the Father, and you shall see me no more: whereas now, if I did not pay the whole debt, when I came to heaven, God the Father would say to me, You are in prison for man's debt, what do you here? you have not paid the debt yet; go to prison again, go down to prison again. No, saith he, but I go to my Father, and ye shall see me no more: and therefore conclude I have paid the full debt: "I go to my Father and ye see me no more."

Would you have a proof of Christ's fulness of excellencies in general? Look then I pray upon the iind chapter of Haggai, and 7th verse, there you have this expression of him. He is called the desire of all nations: "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come:" mark, the desire of all nations shall come. Christ our Lord Jesus, is the desire of all nations. What is there in all the world that is the desire of *all* nations, but Jesus Christ? Some

nations, some kingdoms, as the West Indies, they are full of gold and silver, but they want clothing, and therefore they desire cloth. Other kingdoms now, as these of England and the like, they have much clothing and cloth; but they want gold and silver, and they desire that. Some nations they abound with spices and with wines; but they want corn, and they desire that. Some nations again, they have much corn, aye, but they have no wine, no spices, and they desire that. Oh! but our Lord Jesus Christ, he is the desire of all nations, the desire of all nations. What woman, never so beautiful, that the whole world was in love with? Jesus Christ the desire of all nations. And, saith the apostle, "he hath in all things the pre-eminence," Col. i. 11. If you will, I will gather it up into a syllogism, thus: If Jesus Christ be the desire of all nations, and hath the pre-eminency of all the world; then there is a fulness of excellency in Jesus Christ: but our Lord Jesus is the desire of all nations, having the pre-eminency in all the world; surely, therefore, there is a fulness of excellency in Jesus Christ; a fulness of excellency, a fulness of holiness, a fulness of love. No wonder, then, that Paul says, "I desire to know nothing, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2; no wonder that he said, "I count all things but dung and dross, in comparison of the knowledge of Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 8. Certainly, surely, there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ.

You will say unto me, We see, we know there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, a fulness of grace: but now, by way of application, what is our duty that doth flow from hence?

Much every way: I will instance, in four or five particulars, so many duties that do flow from hence.

First, If there be such a fulness in Jesus Christ, a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ; then let all men come unto him. There is none of us all here present, but labour under some wants or other. Oh, says one, I have great charge, family, parish, or otherwise; and I want grace to manage it. Oh, says another, I have great and strong temptations, and I want strength to resist them. Oh, says another, there are many errors abroad; I want knowledge to discern them, and avoid them; I want wisdom to know the truth, and join with the truth, and own the truth, and manifest the truth. Well, whatever your wants be, there is enough in Jesus Christ to

supply them, there is a fulness in him; why should we not come unto him? Oh! you that never tasted of Christ's sweetness, that never yet partaked of his fulness; come unto the Lord Jesus that you may be filled for ever.

You will say, it may be, I am a poor, weak, ignorant, simple man or woman; a guilty creature: and I am afraid for to come unto him. Mark this.

But, I answer, if Christ's invitation be made to you, then you will not be afraid to come to him. Now I pray you look into the ixth chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon; see what an invitation is made upon this ground of Christ's fulness: "Wisdom hath built her house:" by Wisdom, you must understand Christ, as will easily appear by reading over the former chapter: "Wisdom hath built her an house," that is, the church; "she hath hewn out her seven pillars," the firmness and beauty of the church: seven is a note of perfection: "she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." Here is the fulness of Christ in his church. What then? "She hath sent forth her maidens," that is, the ministers of the gospel, who, as virgins, should be untouched and undefiled by the world: "she crieth in the high places of the city: Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine which I have mingled." Pray observe it, who are invited to partake of this fulness; simple ones: "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither."

Oh! but I am not only simple and ignorant; but the Lord knows I have no heart to good things.

I answer, See what follows: "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth heart," so it is in the Hebrew, "she saith to him," to him that wanteth heart, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine which I have mingled." Oh! is there ever a poor, simple man or woman here; one that complains, The Lord knows I want a heart to what is good! the invitation of the Lord Jesus, it is made to you, it is made to you; think not to say within yourselves, I am afraid to come to Christ.

I have read of the senate of Athens, that once upon occasion they were constrained to sit in the open fields: and being there set in the open fields, a poor chased bird, a sparrow

or the like; chased by the birds of prey; came flying to the bosom of one of the senators, for rescue from the birds of prey: the senator, being of a churlish disposition, he takes the poor little chased bird, and throws it from him, upon the ground, and so killed the bird: whereupon the senate made an order that he should die himself: they would not have a man so churlish to be one of the senators. And do you think that the Lord Jesus Christ, when you come as a poor chased bird for shelter into his bosom; do you think that the Lord Christ will throw you away? No, no; as he is full of glory and excellency, so he is full of love and bounty: whatever, therefore, thou hast been, man or woman; whatever you have been, though you have been never so vile, come unto Jesus Christ, come unto Jesus Christ. Oh! methinks this doctrine that I have now preached unto you, is a solemn and a great invitation to every soul for to come unto Jesus Christ: and therefore come now unto him, come unto Christ, come unto Christ; come drunkard, come swearer, come liar, come unclean person; oh, come, come: you that never tasted of Christ's sweetness, you that never yet partaked of Christ's fulness; come now; come, for there is a fulness in Jesus Christ. That is the first thing.

Secondly, If there be such a fulness in Christ; then let us all trust unto him, build upon him: and you that are the servants and people of God, trust, and trust perfectly: there is no grace would stand us in more stead in these evil times. Beloved, ye all see into what sad times we are now fallen: there is no grace, I say, will stand us in more stead, or more able to turn away the evil that is now upon us, than faith is. Luther hath a notable story to this purpose: There was, saith he, a deadly contest between a great bishop, and a duke of Saxony: the duke of Saxony prepares for war against him: but before he would come upon him, he sends a spy to observe what the bishop was a doing. The spy went: and being returned again; Come, says the duke, what is the bishop a doing? Sir, says he, he is idle, and secure, you may fall upon him and destroy him when you will. Aye, says he, but what says the bishop? Sir, he says thus: I will feed my flock, I will visit the sick, I will preach the gospel; and as for the war, I will *totius belli molem Deo committere:* I will commit the whole weight and bulk of this war to God him-

self, who fighteth for me. Aye, says the duke, did the bishop say so? *bellum ei inferat diabolus, non ego:* then, says he let the devil take up arms against him if he will, for I will not. Thus, thus faith turns away the sword, faith turns away war. And, my beloved, there is no such way, either to beget or increase faith, as the sight and consideration of the fulness of Jesus Christ. "Those that know thy name (saith the Psalmist) they will trust unto thee," Psalm ix. 10. "How excellent is thy name, O Lord! therefore do the children of men put their trust in thee," Psalm xxxvi. 7. Beloved, ye have heard of Christ's name, his name is full of sweetness: oh, therefore, you servants and people of God, that have gone fearing and trembling up and down, dropping under many fears, without assurance of God's love in Christ; if there be such a fulness in Christ, then trust unto him: yea trust, and trust perfectly to him. If Satan come and tempt you, and says thus unto you; Thou art a poor, unworthy creature; and dost thou think to have mercy? Answer, True, Satan, I am so indeed, most unworthy; but there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and I will trust in him. Does Satan tempt thee, and say unto thee; Thou art a poor, guilty creature, and dost thou think to find mercy? Answer, True, Satan, I confess I am, I have committed such and such sins; but there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and I will trust in him: Say, Say Satan what thou wilt against me, I subscribe unto it: I am poor, I am empty, I am unworthy, I am guilty: but Christ is full, Christ is full; there is fulness in Jesus Christ, I will trust unto him. Oh, you servants of the Lord, live much by faith: there is a fulness in Christ, trust unto it. And that is the second.

Thirdly, If there be such a fulness in Christ: then it is our duty to draw forth this fulness: let all men draw forth this fulness. That is done these three ways:

I. By a serious, frequent, solemn consideration and eyeing of Christ's fulness. "For beholding as in a glass (says the apostle) we are changed from glory to glory," 2 Cor. iii. 18. The beholding of Christ's glory, changes us into glory.

II. It is drawn forth also by our resting upon it in a time of temptation. It is here in regard of Christ's fulness, as in regard of God's mercy, or promise: pray mark it, my very

resting upon God's promise in the time of temptation, does make it mine; my very resting upon his mercy in a time of temptation, does make his mercy mine; and my resting also, or your resting upon the fulness of Christ in the time of a temptation, does make it yours.

III. It is drawn forth also, by giving forth: as now the conduit or cistern receives more water into it, by letting out the water which it hath. Possibly, there may be much water in the conduit, or much water in the cistern; and the fountain may be willing to furnish it with more, but it is full already; therefore now, turn the cock, and let that run out which it hath received already, and it draws more into the cistern: so here, beloved, our very spending for Christ receives from Christ: the way to draw out his fulness, is to lay out his fulness; as you do receive from him, so to communicate to other folk: this draws it out. Well, then a fulness ye have heard there is in Christ. This fulness is to be drawn out; ye hear also, how it is, or may be drawn out. Enter therefore into your chamber, and when you are all alone; seriously, frequently, think much of this fulness of Jesus Christ, and in the time of your temptation, then rest upon it. And as it pleaseth Jesus Christ to give out any of his fulness unto you, so let it run out again upon other folk. And this is the third thing.

Fourthly, If there be such a fulness of grace in Christ: then let us all labour to be like unto him; full of grace as Christ, full of meekness, full of humility, full of love especially; for there is a fulness of love in Christ. And yet, alas! whenever was there less love, and more strife than now? whenever less love among professors? whenever more strife than now? Give me leave a little: beloved in the Lord! you see and know what great divisions there are among us, great strifes. All strife and envy arises from an apprehension of scantiness and narrowness in the thing desired. Now then, that which we do strive for; either it is more of the world, or more of Christ. If it be more of the world that we strive for; who shall be most rich, who shall have most honour: if it be more of the world that we strive for: why? oh! why shou ld we strive for that which may make us worser, but cannot make us better? why should we strive for that, when as the very striving for it, will deprive us of it?

If it be more of Christ that we strive for; mark, if it be more of Jesus Christ, and more of him that we strive for; there is enough in him, there is enough in Jesus Christ for to serve us all. If two, or three, or six, or twenty men be athirst; and they go to drink out of a bottle: while one is drinking, the other envies, because he thinks there will not be enough for him too; but if now five, six, twenty, a hundred be athirst, and go to the river, while one is drinking the other envies not. Why? because there is enough to serve them all. Beloved! if it be more of Christ that we strive for, if it be more of Jesus Christ that we strive for; there is a fulness in him, there is enough in Christ, there is enough in Jesus Christ, ye have heard, to serve all our turns. Oh! therefore, that there may be no more striving, no more envy, no more contention, no more division; labour, let us all labour to be more and more like unto Jesus Christ: he was full of grace, especially he was full of love, let us labour to be like unto him.

In the fifth and last place: the fifth duty. If there be such a fulness in Jesus Christ, then take heed how we do any thing that may rob Christ of the glory of his fulness. Let all men take heed how they do any thing that may rob Jesus Christ of the glory of his fulness. As now, suppose that I think and am persuaded that Jesus Christ hath not given a sufficient rule, hath not laid down a perfect, a sufficient rule in the word, for the ordering, and for the governing of the Churches, and therefore I will eke out what he hath done with my own prudence. This robs him of the glory of his prophetical fulness. Or, suppose I think my sins are so great, they can never be pardoned, so great, there is no hope for mercy: this robs him of the glory of his priestly fulness. Or, suppose that I stint and limit Christ unto this or that particular means of delivering of the church; I know that God is able to deliver England, and to deliver the church; but if he do not take this way, if he do not take this course, if this means fail, then we are all undone, then all, all is lost if this means take not. This is to rob Christ of the glory of his kingly fulness; to stint him to one means; to tie him and limit him to one means. Or, suppose that I set my heart upon any creature fulness; and say as the whore said in the viith of Proverbs, "Come and

let us take our fill of love." Come friends, come company, let us go unto such a tavern, or such a place, where we may be fully merry : come, O my soul, take thy contentment in creature fulness, there is enough there. This robs Christ of the glory of all his fulness. To carry away the custom of my thoughts unto another shop from Christ, argues that there is not enough in Christ alone. Then, beloved, to conclude all. Are there any here, as I fear there may be too many, that have thus robbed Jesus Christ of the glory of his fulness? I beseech you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose fulness I have been now preaching to you; I beseech you, in the fear of God, go into your chamber, and be alone awhile, and fall down before the Lord, and say thus unto him, or to this purpose :

Oh, Lord, I confess it hath been so with me: I have thought that there hath not been a sufficient rule for the government of the churches: and herein I have wronged Christ in his prophetical fulness, and the Lord pardon this unto me.

Lord, I confess also, that I have said many times that my sins are so great that there is no hope for mercy, that there is no hope for pardon: herein I have wronged the priestly fulness of Jesus Christ: now the Lord pardon this unto me.

I confess, Lord, I have stinted thee, and I have limited thee, and I have said many times in my haste, If this means fail, then England is undone, the church undone: thus I have limited thee, Lord. Oh, herein I have wronged thee, and robbed Christ in his kingly fulness.

Yea, Lord, I do acknowledge and I do confess, I have gone to creature comforts, and my heart hath taken a content and complacency, as if there were enough there; but now I see there is a fulness in Jesus Christ: the Lord pardon me that ever I let out my heart upon any creature comfort, upon any thing but Jesus Christ. You that have been guilty, fall down and humble yourselves before the Lord, and consider that there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and labour to draw out this fulness from him. Which that you may so do, think on all these things, and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON II.

" And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace."
JOHN I. 16.

I HAVE made entrance into these words in a neighbouring congregation, and shall now desire to go on where I left there.

The words hold forth three great, grand propositions.

First, That there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, That of his fulness all we do receive.

Thirdly, That we do receive of his fulness, even grace for grace.

The former proposition I have despatched, and desire at this time to speak unto the second.

All we do receive of his fulness. " Of his fulness have all we received."

The difficulty that lies upon the proposition is this: Who are meant here by this " All we ? " Some there are that conceive, that by those words we are to understand all the creatures of heaven and earth, because it is said before, in the beginning of the chapter, that " He is the light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world." But though the thing be true, that there is no creature either in heaven or earth, but more or less is beholden to Jesus Christ: for if Christ had not stepped in upon the fall, God's displeasure was so great against man, that he would presently have broke up house; and the sin of the fall was so heavy, that it would have broken the very axle-tree of the world, if Jesus Christ had not put too his shoulder, according to that of the apostle, " He bears up all with the word of his power," Heb. i. 3: yet notwithstanding, all the creatures in heaven or earth cannot be meant here, by this " All we," for all the creatures in heaven and earth do not receive grace: they may be said to receive of the fulness of Christ, but not grace for grace. But at the 12th verse it is said, " As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name." Now in scripture phrase, those are said to receive Christ himself, that do receive his grace; and those that receive his grace, receive Christ himself. Understand therefore by this " All

we," those that receive him; as ye have it in the 12th verse, which is explained to be, Them that believe in his name.

And then the observation or doctrine lies plain before us, which is this:

That all the saints and people of God, do partake of the fulness of Christ in a way of receiving.

It falls asunder into two parts, thus:

First, That there is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers.

Secondly, That whatsoever grace or holiness the saints have from Christ, they have it in a way of receiving.

I shall only speak unto the former at this time:

There is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers. "Of his fulness all we receive." Mark, there is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers.

He is the second Adam which the apostle speaks of, in the 1st Corinthians, xvth chapter, and the 45th verse: "The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The whole world is divided into two great houses: as once in this kingdom, there was the house of York and the house of Lancaster; so now, the whole world is divided into two great houses, the house of the first Adam, and the house of the second Adam. "The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the last Adam was made a quickening spirit:" that is, look as the first Adam did communicate life unto all his seed; so the second Adam does communicate spiritual life and grace unto all his people. As by the first Adam, sin and sorrow and death came into the world, and so upon all mankind; so by the second Adam, grace and life and eternal life unto all believers. There is a dealing out, a giving out of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers. This will appear—

First of all, By the union that there is between Christ and a believer. There is a glorious, a blessed, an incomparable union between Christ and every believer, though he be never so weak, though he be never so poor. There is a union between the root and the branches; and by virtue of that union, the root sends forth life and strength into all the branches, but yet, notwithstanding, the root is not in the branches; nor the branches in the root, mutually. There

is a union between the head and the members, and by virtue of that union, the head hath an influence upon all the members; but yet the head is not in the members, nor the members in the head. But now, there is a union between Christ and believers, and Christ is in them, and they are in Christ: We in Christ, and Christ in us. There is a glorious, and blessed union between them. Now, union is the cause of communion or communication; bread is united unto a man's body by eating of it; and so by virtue of the union, strength is derived into all the parts, into all the members, and the nearer and closer unto, this union is, the more full is the communication. Now though the union between Christ and a believer, be set out in scripture phrase, under such metaphors as these; the root and the branches; the husband and the wife; and the head and members; yet none of all these are able to reach it, not in all respects: it is a glorious, and it is a blessed and incomparable union. And therefore, there must needs be a communication of the fulness of Christ to every believer.

Secondly, My second reason I lay upon four propositions, and so shall arise and ascend unto the conclusion by several steps, thus:

I. There is an infinite treasury of grace and holiness in Jesus Christ; whereby he is able to supply, and succour all those that are tempted. If a man hath had a strait shoe upon his foot, or a strait garment; he knows where it pinches, and accordingly he is able to get it amended. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, He hath put on our flesh, and knows where it pinches; he hath been clothed with our flesh, and he knows every place where it pinches; and accordingly he is able to succour. And therefore, says the apostle, "He was in all things tempted like unto us, that he might be able to succour those that are tempted," Heb. ii. 18. Jesus Christ is not only the Lord Treasurer of all our comforts; but the Lord Keeper of all our graces. The nearer any thing comes unto the fountain of excellency, the more excellent it is. The sun is the fountain of light, and the nearer any thing comes to the sun, the more light it hath. Fire is the fountain of warmth and heat; and the nearer any thing comes to the fire, the more warm it is. Why, the Deity is the fountain of all holiness, and Jesus Christ is so near unto

it, as Mediator; that the apostle says, "In him the fulness of the God-head dwells," Col. ii. 9. And surely therefore there must needs be an infinite treasury of grace, and holiness in him.

The saints, you know, of the Old Testament, they were very holy; Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and Samuel, and David, and Solomon; they were full of grace, and holiness; and yet these were but types of Christ, they were but shadows of Christ. Now the type and the shadow does fall infinitely short of the thing typified, and of the substance: and therefore, if there were so much grace and holiness in things that were but a shadow of Christ; if there was so much wisdom and holiness in others of them that were but the type: oh! what an infinite treasury of grace and holiness must there be in Christ himself. This is the first proposition.

II. As there is an infinite treasury of grace, and holiness in Jesus Christ; so whatever grace and holiness Christ as Mediator hath received by God the Father; he hath not received it for himself, but for others: pray mark it, whatsoever grace and holiness is in Jesus Christ as Mediator, I do not speak of him as God, but as Mediator, he hath not received it for himself, but for others. Jesus Christ was not baptized for himself, but for sinners, stood in the place of sinners when he was baptized. Jesus Christ died not for himself, but for us. When Christ ascended up to heaven, he went not for himself only, but saith he, "I go to prepare a place for you," John xiv. 2. And so when Christ received gifts, says the apostle, "He received gifts for men," Eph. iv. 8; not for himself, but for others: he received gifts for men. The woman hath milk in her breasts, but not for herself, but for her child. The sun hath abundance of light in his body, it is not for himself, but for the world. And so Jesus Christ he hath received abundance of grace and holiness; but it is not for himself, but for others. And therefore pray mark what he says, in John xvii. 19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." He does not say, for my own sake do I sanctify myself, but for their sakes: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." There are certain official parts in the body, you know, that

stand as officers unto all the rest. The stomach hath a great deal of meat in it, but it hath not that meat for itself, but that it may communicate to all the members. The liver hath a great deal of blood in it, but the liver hath not the blood in it for itself, but that it may communicate it unto all the parts. And the head, it hath all the senses seated in it, it hath many spirits; but not for itself, but for the members. So Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church whatsoever grace and holiness as Mediator he hath received, he hath not received for himself, but for others.

This may make the saints and people of God to come with boldness to the throne of grace: hath Christ received for others, and not for himself; then why not for me? Lord, why not for me? Now you shall see that further proved in the lxist chapter of Isaiah, the 1st and 2nd verses: "The Spirit of the Lord God is on me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn." They are the words of Christ, spoken in the person of Christ: as if he had said thus: There are a generation of men in the world, that are taken captive by their sins; and lie bound in chains and irons by Satan: and they are broken and bowed down greatly under the burden of them: now God the Father, he hath designed me to go open the prison doors to these poor captives: and because God the Father hath designed me to it; therefore the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, not in me; therefore the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. So that you see, now, that anointing that falls upon the head of Christ, it falls not upon him for himself, barely, but that it may run down upon all his members. That is a second proposition.

III. As there is an infinite treasury of grace and holiness in Christ, which he hath not received for himself but for others: so, in the third place, there is an infinite propension and willingness in Jesus Christ to communicate this grace unto the children of men. Pray mark it: there is an infinite propension and willingness in Jesus Christ, to communicate

and give out his grace unto the children of men. "He is faithful (says the apostle) in all his house, as Moses was," Heb. iii. 2. Now if Jesus Christ should receive gifts for men, for others; and then run away with all, and not be willing to give them out; he could not be faithful: but faithful he is. Look, I pray, for this in the xvith Psalm, at the 2nd verse: "Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness not for thee: but for the saints that are in the earth, and for the excellent, in whom are all my delight." You read the words thus: "Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee." But in the Hebrew, the word *extendeth* is not. "Thou art my Lord: my goodness not for thee: but for the saints that are in the earth." That these words are spoken of Christ, pray read the four last verses: "I have set the Lord always before me:" at the 8th verse, "because he is at my right-hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Now compare these words with what the apostle says in Acts ii. 25: "David speaketh concerning him (mark): For I foresaw the Lord always before my face; he is on my right-hand, I shall not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad: moreover also, my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," the same words, "neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Mark what is said then at the 29th verse, the apostle proves, that these words of the Psalm, must needs be understood of Christ, and not of David. "Men and brethren, (says he) let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is doth dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Therefore, says he, these words cannot be understood of David, but must be understood of Christ. Now then, this Psalm being thus to be understood of Christ, says Christ, "Lord, thou art my Lord: my goodness is not for thee: but for the saints that are in the earth, and for the excellent, in whom is all my delight." They are my delight, and therefore what goodness I have from thee, I am willing to give it out again unto them; because all my delight is in them. Do you not think, that a man is willing to eat his meat

when he is a hungry? Pray look into the ivth chapter of John, and you shall see what was Christ's meat, verse the 34th: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." My meat is to do the will of him that sent me: what is that? Finish his work; what is that? You read before in the lxist of Isaiah, That the Spirit of the Lord was upon him: and God the Father had anointed him to open the prison door. Now therefore, saith he, look how willing a man is to eat his meat when he is a hungry; so willing am I to relieve poor sinners, to open the prison door to poor captive souls. Tender hearted mothers, are you willing to give your children suck? to have your breasts drawn? Yes: why so? Truly, not only because of my child, but the truth is, unless my breasts be drawn it is a pain to me: not only for my child therefore, but for mine own ease also, you will say. Why, brethren, the humanity of Jesus Christ, is, as I may so speak, the breasts of the Deity; by which we suck out all the holiness and grace which we have: and if Jesus Christ's breasts be not drawn, he counts it a pain to him. And therefore he complains so in the gospel: "I came unto mine own, and mine own received me not," John i. 11; they will not draw my breasts; he counts it a pain to him. Tell me are you willing to receive grace? Yes. If you be willing to receive grace, Jesus Christ is willing to give it; for you cannot be willing, if he were not willing first; your willingness does come from his. But I pray what grace are you willing to have? Oh! says one, I am a poor ignorant creature: I would fain, I would fain have more knowledge. Oh! says one, I am one of great passions, and of a disordered life; and, oh! that I had my life better ordered. Oh! says another, I am a poor guilty soul; and I would have pardon, I would have pardoning grace. Now I will appeal to you: whether do you not think, that an honest man is willing to do the work of his office? Can a man be an honest man, and not be willing to do the work of his office; this is the office of Jesus Christ. He is a prophet, and therefore he must be willing to teach you; you that complain that you are ignorant. This is the office of Jesus Christ to be a king; and therefore he is is willing to direct you; and to order you: you that complain of distemper, and disorder.

This is the office of Christ to be a priest, and therefore he is willing to satisfy for you: and indeed, if Jesus Christ were not willing to give out his grace unto the children of men, he would never lay it upon such conditions as he does. When a man is unwilling to do a thing for another, he will put it upon hard conditions: as Saul being unwilling to give his daughter to David, he put it upon hard conditions. But now, What does Jesus Christ require? What does the Lord Jesus Christ require for the communication of his grace? But only this, that you do receive it: mark only this, that we do receive it; a condition indeed, that is no condition: I say a condition that is no condition, because he promises strength to receive also. Oh! my beloved: why should we cumber the way to heaven with preparations, and qualifications, and precedaneous conditions? There are no incomes, no incomes to be paid at our coming in to Jesus Christ; there are no precedaneous conditions: grace is free and mercy is free, and Christ is free, and his love is free; there is an infinite propension in Jesus Christ, to communicate this his grace to the children of men. This is the third proposition.

IV. As Christ is infinitely willing: (so in the fourth place) there is nothing, either in heaven, or in earth that can hinder him from doing all. For now, grant all the former three: that there is an infinite treasury of grace in Christ. That he hath not received it for himself, but others. That he is infinitely willing to give it out unto the children of men. Yet, if he can be hindered, all the former is nothing: mark therefore the fourth, and then we come to the use. There is nothing, either in heaven, or earth, that can hinder Jesus Christ from communicating his grace.

"I work, says God, and who shall let? And I communicate, my grace, says Christ, and who shall hinder?" Isa.xliii. 13. If any thing can hinder, it must be either Satan without us, or our sins within us: Satan without cannot hinder, he could not go into the herd of swine, he could not destroy a hog, a sow, a pig till he had leave from Christ: and can Satan hinder then, when Christ intends to communicate his grace? He is called the strong man, but Christ is called the stronger than he. "Peter, Peter, says our Saviour, Satan hath desired to winnow thee; but I have prayed that thy faith fail not,"

Luke xxii. 31, 32. Aye, one prayer, one prayer by Jesus Christ is stronger than all the temptations of Satan. Satan cannot hinder. Nor can our sins within hinder. For if you look into the iind chapter of Titus; it is said there at the 14th verse, "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." If from all iniquity, then from unbelief. Then unbelief cannot hinder. If a King came on purpose to pardon all rebellion: if he be able, and willing, and come on purpose to pardon all rebellion: then no one rebellion can hinder, can be a reason why he should not pardon. The covenant that God makes with his, is like the covenant that he made with Noah; as you read in the livth chapter of Isaiah, the 8th and 9th verses: "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer: for this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee." Mark, the covenant God would make with his people, is like the covenant that he made with Noah: The covenant that he made with Noah, what is that? Pray now look into the viiith chapter of Genesis, and the 21st verse, Noah being come out of the ark, and offering unto the Lord; "The Lord smelled a sweet savour: and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." I think it should rather be read thus, according to the Hebrew; I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; although: ye read it, for, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for, the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. One would think he should rather say thus: I will curse the ground again, and I will bring a new flood, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. No, but the covenant that God made with Noah, was thus: I do now make a covenant with mankind, that the world shall never be drowned again; yea, though man do sin, yet the world shall not be drowned again. This is the covenant that the Lord made with Noah: The Lord did not make such a covenant as this: I do promise, that

the world shall not be drowned again, if man do not sin. No, but the covenant that the Lord made with Noah was thus: but I promise the world shall not be drowned again, though men do sin again: this is the covenant the Lord made with Noah: it was so far from running upon a condition, that it runs cross to all conditions. So now the Lord says concerning a poor believer: I do take this soul into covenant with me: Yea, and though he do sin, yet notwithstanding I will pardon him, and this soul shall never lie under water again, shall never lie under water again: his sin shall not hinder my grace; he shall never lie under water again: for as the covenant I made with Noah, such is the covenant I make with every believer. And beloved, if indeed that we could hinder Christ, when he comes to comunicate his grace; if our sins could hinder, then we might resist grace with an overcoming resistance. It is true, a man may resist the grace of God, with a gainsaying resistance; but he cannot resist the grace of God, with an overcoming resistance. Whatsoever is overcome, is overcome by a stronger; man, I say, cannot resist with an overcoming resistance. Pray do but consider well the covenant of grace: says the Lord in that: "I will take away the heart of stone, and I will give an heart of flesh: and I will cause ye to walk in my ways; and I will put my Spirit into you," Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. I will take away the heart of stone? What is that? a stone is hard, a hard thing does not yield to the touch, a soft thing yields. Pharaoh had a hard heart, and therefore he yielded not. When therefore, the Lord makes such a promise as this; I will take away the heart of stone: what is his meaning? his meaning is plainly, I will take away the unyielding, the resisting disposition that is in man. Now therefore, when the Lord makes such a promise as this: that "He will put his Spirit into them, and cause them to walk in his ways: Our resisting can be no hindrance: Why? because the Lord hath made a promise to take away our resisting. If the covenant had run thus "I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my ways;" upon this condition, that you do not resist, then we could hinder: but the Lord in the same promise that he does say, "I will put my Spirit into them, and cause them to walk in my ways:" He doth also promise to take away the resisting heart, to

take away the spirit of resisting. "I will take away the heart of stone:" there is the resisting: "And I will cause them to walk in my ways." So that our sins cannot hinder.

Now then, put all these together. There is an infinite treasury of grace and holiness in Jesus Christ. This he hath not received for himself, but for others. There is an infinite propension and willingness in him to give out this grace unto the children of men. And nothing either in heaven or earth can hinder him: surely therefore, there is the communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers.

You will say unto me then, Why are believers then so empty of grace? It is the ordinary complaint: Oh! I am full of evil: Oh, my heart is empty of all that is good: Believers they complain thus: How can this doctrine be true, if this experience be good?

I answer: I. The fulness of grace which is in a believer, is many times hid from the world, and from himself. When you go to the sea-side, you see the water, you see abundance of water; and ye hear the water roaring, and raging, and making a noise; but you do not see the gold, and the silver that lies at the bottom of the sea: you see the water of the sea; but you do not see the wealth that is in the sea. So now, when you go and look upon a believer; you behold his troubles, you see his waves, and all the troubles that beat upon him. Oh! but the wealth of a believer, the fulness of a believer, the fulness of Christ that is in him, that you see not, it is hid from the world, and it is hid from himself, many times. And therefore, says the apostle, "Our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 3, 4.

II. Though there be a communication of the fulness of Christ unto all believers, yet he does not communicate as a universal cause. The universal cause doth seldom or never produce particular effects, but with a concurrence of particular causes. The sun is the universal cause of all the fruitfulness that is upon the earth: yet notwithstanding, it does produce the fruit, your corn, barley, rye, and wheat, with the help of man, the ground is plowed and sown. The river, or

the fountain is the universal cause of the water that ye have in your houses: but yet notwithstanding, you have not this water, but by pipes, and conveyance; and when ye want water in your house, you do not say, There is no water in the Thames, there is no water in the fountain. No, but surely the pipe is broken, the pipe is stopped; or we want some pipe or other. So now, when you want grace, and when you are empty of grace; you are not to say; oh! it is because there is not enough in Christ, or Christ is not willing; but rather, surely the pipe is broken, or we want this or that ordinance: the pipe is not clean, the pipe is stopped, and therefore we are so empty of grace as we are.

III. Though there be a communication of the fulness of Christ unto all believers: yet notwithstanding he does it in proportion. Mark, Christ does give unto every man according to the place he bears in his body. As the soul, the soul sends forth life and motion to all the members; but the soul does not give a hearing faculty unto the eye, and the soul does not give a seeing faculty unto the ear; neither can the foot say, I have nothing from the soul, because I cannot speak like the tongue; neither can the tongue say, I have nothing from the soul, because I cannot walk like the foot. So the Lord Jesus Christ, he doth observe what place every man doth bear in his body, and accordingly he doth give forth grace unto men. You cannot say thus. Surely, I have none of Christ, because I cannot pray, and do so as others do. But mark, what is the place that you do bear in the body of Christ, and you may go to Christ for strength for that: you may say thus, Lord, through thy grace thou hast given me such a place in thy body; and I want strength for that; Oh, let me have it from thee.

IV. Though there be a communication of the fulness of Christ unto all believers: yet it is according to their necessities and wants. The lace, you know, it is laid upon the seam; upon the seam there lies the lace: lace indeed may be laid upon the whole cloth; but ordinarily, your silken lace, your silver lace, your golden lace, it is laid upon the seam. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, he knows all the seams of your life, all the seams of your life: there he lays his golden lace on. Mark, therefore, what are the seams of thy life, and see if Christ hath not laid on something there.

Take but these four considerations together, and there is a sufficient answer to that objection.

I come to the application.

First. And whilst I stand upon this point: methinks here I see the transcendent excellency of the saints, and of believers; and the betterness of their condition, above the men of the world, though they be never so rich, or great. Beloved! every man is according to the fulness that he doth live upon: there is the fulness of the earth; "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," 1 Cor x. 26. And wicked men, they are said to be filled with this: "Whose bellies thou fillest with hid treasures," Psalm xvii. 14. And there is the fulness of Jesus Christ: and of this fulness the saints and believers do all receive and partake. Look therefore what a difference there is between these fulnesses; the fulness of the earth; and the fulness of Jesus Christ: such a mighty difference in point of excellency, there is between a believer, though he be never so poor: and a wicked man though he be never so rich. Give me leave a little, to open the difference of these fulnesses to you; that so you may see the difference between men and men, and be encouraged unto a godly course.

I. The fulness of the world, it is a fulness made up of many things. "Martha, Martha," says Christ, "thou art busied about many things," Luke x. 41. It is a fulness made up of many things; and therefore not a homogenial fulness: the fulness of Christ is a fulness made up of one thing, the Deity, in whom the Godhead dwells; and therefore it is a homogenial fulness; every part of it is fulness: every part of a homogenial body, hath the name of the whole: every part of water is called water, though it be but a drop: every part of fire, is fire, though it be but a spark: and every part of heaven, it is called heaven, though it be but a corner of heaven. And so, every part of the fulness of Jesus Christ, is fulness. As the philosophers say of the soul, *Anima tota in toto*, that the soul is wholly in the whole, and wholly in every part; so the fulness of Christ, it is wholly in the church; and it is wholly in every believer. Every believer may come and say, I have all Christ. But as for the fulness of the world, every one that hath the world's fulness cannot say so; I have all the world's fulness.

II. The fulness of the earth, is a fulness made up of the worser things. The world, it is a great body, and it hath in it some things that are of a grosser, more drossy nature, and some things that are of a finer nature. The fulness of the earth, it is of the drossy, and the grosser part of the world: oh! but the fulness of Christ, it is of the finer part; and the fulness that does come from him unto believers, the best of the best; wine of the lees; and marrow out of the bones; and wine well refined; it is of the finer part of the world: the other is but the grosser, the thicker, the dirtier, the more grosser part.

III. The fulness of the earth, is a fulness that runs into emptiness; a fulness that hath a hole at the bottom; like unto an hour-glass: if you turn it up, the upper part of the glass is full of sand; but because it hath an hole at the bottom, and there stands a glass beneath it as big as itself; it empties itself into that glass. Then you turn up the glass again, and that is full: but because that having an hole at the bottom, it runs out, having an empty glass beneath it, and this fulness runs into it. So now it is with the world's fulness: a man he hath a great estate, he hath his glass full of sand: aye, but because his children, and his family stand under him; his sand runs into them, and he is soon emptied; he is soon emptied into them. Then, when the father is dead, and gone; and hath emptied out his fulness into his children; the children's glass is turned up: but they having children under them, and house under them; their sand also, is soon run out, it runs out into emptiness. Thus, all the fulness of the world, it is but a fulness that hath a hole at the bottom, that runs into emptiness. Oh! but the fulness of Jesus Christ, the fulness of Jesus Christ it is a dwelling fulness; his fulness runs out into believers, and yet he is full himself: in him the fulness of the Godhead dwells, it dwelleth there.

IV. The fulness of the earth, it can never satisfy the better part of man, the soul, it can never satisfy that. All satisfaction and contentment arise from the conjunction of a convenient with a convenient; the conjunction of suitables. If a man have never so great an estate, if his heart be not suited to it, he hath no content. If a man have never so small an estate, if his heart be suited to it, he is content.

So that now, all content arises from suitableness, the conjunction of suitables. What suitableness is there between the fulness of the earth, and the better part of man, the soul? Mark; properly a thing is never said to be full, till it be full of that for which it is made: a man's chest, a chest or trunk, is not said to be full of air; though it be full of air; yet notwithstanding, we say the chest or trunk is empty, because it is not filled with that for which it was made. And so take one of these meeting houses; though the place be full of stools, yet notwithstanding, though, I say, the place be full of stools, or full of air; yet we say, the church is empty: because though it be full, yet it is not full of that for which it is made, full of people. So now, take a man that hath all the fulness of the earth: because that his soul was never made, his better part was never made for the fulness of the earth, therefore he is said to be empty, in the midst of all his fulness his heart is empty; and the man is an empty man, because his heart is not full of that for which he was made, and that is Christ, that is Christ; the fulness of Christ in him; he is an empty man all this while. Oh but the fulness of Jesus Christ is a soul-satisfying fulness: "He that drinks of the water that I shall give him, (says he) shall never thirst again," John iv. 14. "When I awake (saith the Psalmist) I shall be satisfied with thy likeness," Psa. xvii. 15. And that is the fourth.

V. The fulness of the earth cannot commend a man unto God, or make him more lovely or beautiful in the eyes of God. The poor, vain, foolish stage-player, thinks himself a brave and a jolly man while he is in king's clothes; or while he is acting the part of a king: but the wise spectator, he says, And is he that does but act the king's part, or hath the king's clothes on, so brave a man; what is a king indeed? Beloved, the Lord he sees all we have and do; stands by as a wise spectator; and when men brave it out with the world's fulness; aye, what then is the man, that acts the fulness of Christ? Is he so brave a man that hath a possession here, land, and house; what is he then that hath an eternal inheritance? If there fall but the least drop of the fulness of Christ upon a soul, it makes the soul lovely and beautiful in the eyes of God. The apostle speaking of the adorning of women: says he, at the 3rd verse, "Whose

adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is incorruptible; even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," 1 Peter iii. 4. As if he should say: all other ornaments, plaiting of hair, and gold and the like, is of no price in the eyes of God: oh! but a quiet spirit, and a meek spirit; one drop of the fulness of Christ falling upon the soul, makes the soul lovely in the sight of God; is of great price.

VI. The fulness of the earth, is a fulness that is mixed with poison, sin, and the curse of God. What pleasure or delight can a man take in drinking, when he shall consider with himself, that poison is mixed withal? this is good, or sweet liquor, says he, indeed; oh! but there is poison in the cup, and therefore I will not meddle with it. Take all the fulness of the world; and if it be not mixed with the fulness of Jesus Christ, there is poison in it, the curse of God in it, the wrath of God there: and therefore what pleasure, what contentment can a man take therein, without the fulness of Jesus Christ?

VII. The fulness of the earth is a defiling fulness. When a thing is mixed with any thing that is worse than itself, it is defiled thereby: if silver be mingled with gold, the silver is not defiled thereby, because gold is better than the silver: but if the silver be mingled with lead; the silver is defiled, because it is mixed with something that is worse than itself. So now, if a man be mingled with spiritual and heavenly things, his heart is not defiled thereby, because they are better than himself: but if a man's heart be mingled with the things of the world, his heart is defiled; because it is mingled with something that is worse than himself: and the more a man's heart is mingled with the things of the earth, the more defiled it is. As a dog, that hath bemired himself, the more he fawns upon you, the more he dirties you. If you take a dog abroad with you into the fields, and he runs into a dirty ditch, or the river; after he is dirty you will not suffer him to come near you; and the more he fawns upon you, and leaps upon you the more he defiles you. Truly such is the earth's and the world's fulness: as, I say, a dog, the more he fawns upon you, and falls upon you, the more it

defiles you. Oh! but the fulness of Jesus Christ is a pure fulness, a fulness that is full of pureness.

VIII. Take all the fulness of the world, and though it be never so much, it falls under your expectation. Sink your expectations as low as you can, and yet notwithstanding, it will fall below your expectation. As for the fulness of Jesus Christ, raise and screw up your expectation as high as you can, and yet you shall find more therein than ever you expected.

IX. As for the fulness of the earth, sometimes it is better wanted than enjoyed. It may make you miserable, it cannot make you happy. Oh! but the fulness of Jesus Christ, it can never make you miserable, it will certainly make you happy, there is no such time, wherein it is better wanted than enjoyed.

X. As for the fulness of the earth, again, it costs a man, many times, more than its worth. It costs him his time, his precious thoughts, his soul; much is laid out for it, much care to get it, much fear to keep it, and much grief to lose it. Oh! but the fulness of Jesus Christ, it costs him nothing: "Come, buy wine and milk, without money or money's worth," Isa. lvi. 1. Christ gives much, and takes little, takes nothing; it costs you nothing, and having it, you have all.

XI. And again, to add no more of these, take all the fulness of the earth, and though it be never so much: it is not able to answer you with love; to return you love for your love. The greatest, and noblest gift of the world, is love. That is always unworthy of your love, that cannot answer your love again. If you have a full bag, if you have a full table, if you have a full house: these fulnesses cannot answer you with love again; but it can defile your own love. Oh! but the fulness of Christ it can answer you with love for love, it gives you a better love than you brought: it nobilitates, and meliorates, and raises your own love for ever. Behold! this is the fulness, this is the fulness that the saints and believers do partake in, that they do receive of: and they may come to this fulness of Jesus Christ, and they may say, Of this fulness, of this fulness we have all received. As those wicked men, they may go the fulness of the earth, and they may say indeed; of this fulness we have all received; but as

for that fulness we have none of it. Oh! how much better is the condition of a believer, than the condition of a wicked man, though he be never so great or rich.

You that are believers, you do envy at the men of the world, because of their fulness? I pray tell me, would you change your fulness for theirs? Would you change your condition for theirs?

And you that are of the world, wicked ungodly men; that have but the earth's fulness, Why do you lay out your thoughts and your time upon such a fulness? a dropsical fulness; a fading fulness; a dying fulness; a fulness that is mixed with a curse; a fulness that does all bemire you, and dirty you: pray tell me, are you able with daisies, and tulips of the world to satisfy your better part? Oh! know you not, that notwithstanding all the earth's fulness, that a wicked man's fortune, I say, that a wicked man's fortune, it lies in a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone? And when you have done all you can, and gathered all that ever you can together; you may go unto your full purses; or unto your full bags; or unto your full houses; or unto your full barns; and you may say: of this fulness I have received. Oh! but you cannot go unto the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and say: and of this fulness my soul hath received. Oh, fool, says our Saviour, when his barns are full, "this night shall thy soul be taken away from thee," Luke xii. 20. And when you come below, in the pit where no water is; then you will complain, and say: Oh, wretch that I was, I might have had of the fulness of Jesus Christ, but I chose rather the fulness of the earth, and if I had had the fulness of Christ, I had been made for ever; but I chose rather the fulness of the world, than the fulness of Jesus Christ, and now I am lost for ever; Oh, I am lost for ever, I have none of the fulness of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, What an encouragement here is then, and so I come unto the second use: and I will not hold you long in it. What an encouragement is here unto all men good and bad, to come in unto Jesus Christ, and partake of his fulness! I say in the second place; here is encouragement unto all you that hear the word of the Lord this day, good or bad: an encouragement unto all souls, good and bad, to come in unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and partake of his ful-

ness! Says our Lord and Saviour, "When I am lift up, I will draw all men after me," John xii. 32. Aye, love is a drawing thing. Love is a drawing thing: it draws men and women together into one yoke, that lived far asunder. And what greater love than this, that Jesus Christ should lay down his life for poor sinners? Wisdom, wisdom is a drawing thing; it drew the Queen of Sheba from far to come unto Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here! Riches, riches, wealth, wealth is a drawing thing. Bounty and liberality a drawing thing; it draws the poor beggar to the rich man's door. And behold, here is riches! Oh, there is an infinite treasury of grace and holiness in Jesus Christ. And here is liberality! For there is an infinite propension and willingness in the Lord Jesus Christ, to give out of this fulness unto poor sinners. Oh, hath God the Father exalted Jesus Christ, and shall not our hearts exalt him? Beloved, let but Jesus Christ be exalted in your thoughts and your hearts, and you will stand firm against all temptations, firm against all discouragements, firm against all afflictions.

Firm against all temptations. If temptations come to offer you profit and pleasure; then will you make this answer: no, you bid me loss; for there is a fulness in Jesus Christ; and of his fulness through the Lord's mercy, I have received.

Firm against all discouragements. If the devil come and tell you; Thou art now a professor, but ere long you will fall away, and prove as great a scandal to religion, as ever you honoured it before. You will make this answer, True, indeed, Satan, I have a backsliding soul, I have a backsliding heart; but there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and through the Lord's mercy, I have received of this fulness; and therefore I shall persevere in the way that I am in, notwithstanding all thy discouragements.

Firm against all afflictions. If you want this creature comfort, or the other creature-comfort; you will answer: Aye, true, I want friends, I want money, I want credit. Oh! but yet, there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and there is enough in him; and this fulness, through the Lord's mercy, I have received. Oh, what a drawing, what a drawing argument is here! Methinks the stoutest sinner in all the

congregation should now come in and close with the Lord Jesus Christ.

You will say unto me. Here are encouragements indeed to believers; for the doctrine runs thus. There is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers. Oh! but what encouragement is here for others, that are not believers? And truly I am afraid, I am even afraid that I am not one of those; what encouragement is there for others that are not believers also.

I answer, Pray look into the lxviiith Psalm, and consider it well, at the 18th verse. See what is spoken concerning Christ to this purpose that now I am upon. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive. Thou hast received gifts for men (it is spoken of Christ); yea, for the rebellious also;" mark that word. Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also. Well then, is there ever a rebellious child in this congregation? Is there ever a rebellious drunkard, that hath taken up arms against the Lord Jesus Christ? Is there ever a rebellious swearer, or an unclean heart here, that hath taken up arms against the Lord Jesus Christ. Says the text, "He hath received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also." The reason why you have not these gifts, is, because you do not come to Christ. Oh! but if you would come to Christ, mark, If you would but come to Christ, you that are rebellious, if you would come to Jesus Christ, he hath these gifts, or grace by him; if you would come to him, you should have these gifts from him. Who would not throw down his weapons now? Is there ever a rebel in all this congregation, that hath taken up arms against the Lord Jesus Christ heretofore? Methinks he should be encouraged hence to come unto Jesus Christ. Bodin hath a story concerning a great rebel, that had made a great and strong party against a Roman emperor: and the emperor makes proclamation; that whoever could bring in the rebel, either alive or dead, should have such a great sum of money. The rebel hearing of this, he comes in himself, presents himself unto the emperor, and demands the sum of money. Says the emperor: If now, I should put him to death, the world would think I did it to save my money: notwithstanding all his former rebellion, the emperor pardons him, and gave him the sum of money. Oh!

would a heathen emperor do thus by a poor rebel? And if thou, man or woman, wilt throw down thy weapons, and come in unto the Lord Jesus Christ, do you think that the Lord Jesus Christ, will not give to you those gifts that he hath received for you? Certainly he will. Oh! methinks, therefore, every poor sinner should now hang upon this last word; yea, for the rebellious also. Hath the Lord Jesus Christ received gifts for men. and for the rebellious also? I will for ever hang upon that word, also. Oh! I have been a rebel: I have been an unclean rebel; I have been a swearing rebel; I have been a drunken rebel: Oh! Lord, I will throw down my weapon, and hang upon this word, also: Hath he received gifts for men; and for the rebellious also? Oh! I will come in unto him. Oh! what a mighty encouragement is here for all, good and bad, to come in unto Jesus Christ. Come drunkard, come swearer, come unclean heart, come Sabbath-breaker, come lying children, come stealing servants; oh, come unto the Lord Jesus Christ that you may be filled for ever; oh, come unto Christ, that you may leave your sins. Here is encouragement to all, good and bad, to come unto Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, One word more of use unto believers, and so I have done. Is there a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers? Then, believers, own your own, own your own; labour to strengthen your assurance of your union with Jesus Christ, and maintain your confidence in him. If you have assurance of union with Jesus Christ, you may have the comfort of all this truth: you may, and you will say thus, or to the like purpose: Hath the Lord given me Christ, and will he not with him give me all things else? True indeed, I want grace to do such a work with, to pray with, to hear with, to examine my own heart withal. I want grace to do such a work for God. Oh, but there is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers, and through the Lord's grace I am one; there is a communication of the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ unto all the saints, and through the Lord's grace I am one; and therefore in due time I know I shall have this grace communicated to me.

But if you want the assurance of your union with Jesus Christ, oh then you will want the comfort of this truth, then

you will break out and say, True indeed, there is the communication of the fulness of Christ unto believers, but the Lord knows I am none; it is true indeed there is a communication of the fulness of Christ unto all the saints, but the Lord knows I am none. I have an unclean heart of mine own; the Lord knows I am none. Oh, therefore, you that have gone doubting up and down, and had no assurance of your condition all this while, assurance of your union with Jesus Christ; for the love of God get it now, as you desire to have the comfort of this truth that now I have been upon, get it now.

You see, beloved, these times we are fallen upon are dying times; and truly I may say, dying times and doubting hearts cannot stand together. Oh, cock up, cock up; you that have had your evidence for heaven lying abroad all this while, get it in. Labour to get assurance of your union with Jesus Christ, and maintain your confidence and assurance, and so shall you have the comfort of all this truth made good unto you. And the Lord give it in unto you.

SERMON III.

"And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace." JOHN I. 16.

I HAVE made entrance into these words in other congregations, and desire to proceed here where I left there.

The words are spoken of our Lord and Saviour Christ: they hold forth three great, grand propositions.

First, That there is a fulness of grace in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, That of his fulness all we have received.

Thirdly, That of his fulness all we have received, even grace for grace.

I have done with the first proposition. The second affordeth this observation:

That all the saints and people of God do partake of the fulness of Jesus Christ in a way of receiving.

This fulls asunder into two parts, or two branches.

First, That there is a communication of the fulness of Jesus Christ unto all believers.

Secondly, That whatever grace or holiness the saints have from Christ, they have it in a way of receiving.

I have done, also, with the first of these, and am now, God willing, to speak to the second:

Whatsoever grace or holiness the saints and people of God have from Christ; they have it all in a way of receiving. "Of his fulness all we have received."

The former branch told us that Christ communicates: this tells us that we receive. There the emphasis lay upon Christ's communicating, and here the accent is set upon our receiving. The grace of Jesus Christ is not born with us; we do not go to Jesus Christ in the strength of our nature, to take of his fulness to ourselves, but Jesus Christ gives out and we receive: all in a way of receiving.

The grace and mercy of our justification and remission of sins, is by way of receiving. "Not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," Rom. v. 11. Atonement is to be had, it is to be had by Christ, and this in a way of receiving.

Again, The grace and mercy of our adoption is to be had in a way of receiving. "He came to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," Gal. iv. 5. Adoption is a blessing that is most desirable: this Christ gives, and this we receive.

Again, The grace of our sanctification is to be had in a way of receiving. What is the cause and original of all our grace or holiness but the Spirit of God? and that is received. "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. iii. 2. The schools say, that the word grace, is either taken for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, or for saving and sanctifying grace.

Take grace for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as sometimes the word is used in Scripture, and that is in a way of receiving Acts x. 46, "They heard them speak with tongues." At the 47th verse, "Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost;" that is, the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Take grace for holiness and sanctification, and that is, also,

in a way of receiving; to be had in a way of receiving. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," Rom. viii. 15. There are gifts of prayer, and there is the Spirit of prayer, of adoption, crying, Abba, Father. The first may be without grace, but the second not: wherever the second is, there is grace: and this is received, saith the apostle, here.

In general, all is by way of receiving. "As ye have received the Lord Christ (says the apostle) see that ye walk in him," Col. ii. 6. And, in another place, "What hast thou, that thou hast not received?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. What hast thou that thou hast not received? all in a way of receiving. "He shall come down," says the Psalmist in the lxxiind Psalm, speaking concerning our Lord and Saviour Christ, and his grace, at the 6th verse, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass:" or, as some write it, for so the original will bear it, "He shall come down like rain upon the fleece:" having relation to Gideon's fleece. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." A Psalm for Solomon, says the title, but there are many things in this Psalm that cannot properly be understood of Solomon: but, in a type, properly belonging to Jesus Christ. For as Strigelius does well observe: at the 7th verse, the verse next following this text, it is said, "In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." Solomon did not live so long as the moon endures; this, therefore, is to be understood of Christ. And, at the 5th verse, it is said, "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." They did not fear Solomon; men did not fear Solomon as long as the sun and moon endure, through all generations: this, therefore, must be understood of Christ. Now see, therefore, what is said of Christ, and concerning his grace: says the text, in the 6th verse, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." Like rain: rain, you know, is that which does make the earth fruitful. *Non ager sed annus facit fructum:* it is not the sowing, but it is the year that causes fruit: it is the rain that causeth fruit: and so it is the grace of Jesus Christ that does make us fruitful; his grace the cause of our grace. "I

will be as dew (says the Lord, in the xivth of Hosea) unto Israel:" and then follows fruitfulness.

Again, The rain cometh by special appointment from God, with a kind of discrimination. "He maketh the rain to fall upon one city (saith the prophet) and not upon another," Amos iv. 7. As we read concerning Gideon's fleece, Judges vi. 38, 39, 40, the dew fell upon the fleece, when all the earth was dry round about it; and then the dew fell upon the ground, when the fleece was dry. And this was a type of the grace of Christ. When the Jews were bedewed with the grace of Christ, then all the nations round about, they were dry; and then when God bedewed the Gentiles, the nations round about, with his grace, then the Jews were dry, and they are dry to this day.

Again, the rain falleth, it is the Scripture phrase, the rain falleth, and falleth upon the earth, and the earth is a recipient to receive it. It is mere recipient at the first, and then brings forth its fruit. The rain falleth, and so doth the grace of Christ; the grace of Christ falls upon the souls of men and women. Saith the text here, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." So doth the grace of Jesus Christ, it comes down upon a poor soul, all in a way of receiving, all in a way of receiving; whatever grace or holiness a man hath on this side heaven, it is all in a way of receiving.

And this will appear further to you, if you consider the insufficiency of nature, the supernaturality of grace, the shortness of all means that are appointed thereunto, the work and nature of faith, and the posture and true behaviour of prayer.

First of all, There is a natural inability in a man unto what is good, truly, spiritually good.

I. A man is unable by nature to overcome any sin, though it be never so small. A man by nature, he may abstain from vices, from a sin, but overcome it he cannot. Sin may be satisfied and not mortified. Mark, sin may be satisfied and not mortified. As in the dropsy, there is a great deal of difference between the satisfying of a man's thirst, and the healing of the disease. Many men think that their sin is certainly healed, when it is only satisfied. Whereas a beggar, when he is competently served, he will beg no more.

And sin, beggar-like, when it is well served it will not beg again presently, not in the same temptation. Sin itself, will cease to sin, that it may gather strength to sin. But now, a man by nature he cannot overcome it. And therefore in the 1 Cor. xv. 57, the apostle says thus: "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Victories, and all victories is through our Lord Jesus Christ. And if in the Old Testament, all victories were given from God, all outward victories were given from him. Then much more in the New Testament, are all our spiritual victories, the former being but types of these, much more are all our spiritual victories, then to be given to God. Now ye see how it was with David, in the xviiith Psalm, concerning outward victories; he gives all to God. Says he there, at the 32nd verse, "It is God that girdeth me with strength. He maketh my feet like hind's feet: he teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms." And at the 2nd verse, says he, "The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer: my God, my strength in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and mine high tower." As if all his warlike strength and skill were from God. And is not much more our spiritual strength which we have in our christian warfare from Jesus Christ? "I have set the Lord always at my right hand, therefore I shall not fall," says the Psalmist, Ps. xvi. 8. Naturally then, a man is utterly unable to overcome any sin, or temptation, though it be never so small.

II. As a man is unable to overcome any sin: so also, if he be fallen, he is unable to rise again. Peter himself must have a look from Christ before he could repent. As if Jesus Christ had said to him; Peter, thou art now down in the dirt, and know thou canst not arise, unless I give forth my hand unto thee: then here is my hand; and so he did heave him up. Every sin that a man does commit, he is taken captive by it, more or less: sin is a captivity. Now, *Voluntas non est libera, nisi liberata:* a man is not free, unless freed. If the Son make you free, you are free indeed; but else not at all. Every sin that a man does commit, it is a mortal wound, a death of the soul, sin is. A man may be able to kill himself; but being killed he cannot raise himself. The ship having his rudder broken, cannot go where it will, but must

go where the tempest pleases. And beloved, there is never a sin that a man commits, but he does strike upon his rudder, he does strike upon the earth withal; and he does lose his rudder. A poor sheep is able for to lose itself, and to wander: but being lost is not able to come home again. Yea, our Saviour says, in the parable of the lost sheep, meaning lost man, the lost sheep is taken by the shepherd, or the good man that finds it, and is laid upon his shoulder, and so brought back again. What is this shoulder, but the strength of Christ? And indeed, if a poor soul, if a wandering, poor, lost soul, be not laid on the shoulder of Jesus Christ; he will lose, and wander unto all eternity, will lose himself, and wander for ever. This is well expressed, as an ancient does observe in the example of Adam: when Adam had sinned, and fallen; Adam was not able to return again. Let us mark it the rather, because Adam, he was our great common father; and in his example we may all see our own faces. Says he, Adam being fallen, he could not rise again: but when Adam was fallen, what does he? Then he sets himself, for to make himself clothes of fig-leaves, that so he might be freed from the injury of the weather: he could mind his clothes, and do something to take away his shame; but not one thought of God, not one word of God whom he had lost. And so now man, man having sinned; what does he do? He can mind his clothes, he can mind the affairs of the world; those things that concern this life, and his body: oh! but not one word, not one thought of God, until the voice of the Lord be heard: and what then? Then Adam-like he may be ashamed, and may be afraid; but yet no repentance till Christ comes. Naturally a man being fallen, he is unable to rise again.

III. As he is unable to rise again: so he is unable to stand, to hold, to continue: though he should rise up again, he is unable to stand, he is unable to hold, to continue. And therefore David seeing his people in a good frame, he prays, That the Lord would continue that good in the thoughts of their heart, and that for ever, 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. And so the apostle, in the 1 Peter v. 10, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered awhile, make ye perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Pray mark the words,

" the God of all grace, stablish, strengthen, settle you." He does not say, The God of nature settle you. Oh, it is an act of grace, of great grace, of rich grace to be settled, it is an act of great grace to be truly settled, as Hierom excellently notes, God is always a giver, God is always a bestower. It shall not suffice me that God hath once given, unless he would always give. You know the parable concerning the strong man that ye read of in Matt. xii. being cast out by a stronger than he, and yet returns again. The devil is this strong man in some great, and gross sin; now, though he be cast out; yet notwithstanding the room being emptied, though it be garnished with moral virtues, and evangelical gifts; yet the room being left empty of Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ not keeping the house: says the devil, the house is mine still; and therefore, says he, I will return to mine house, he calls it *his* house all this while; though the strong man were cast out, and though the room were swept and garnished, yet he calls it *his* house still, because Jesus Christ did not keep there, and continue there. So that the Lord Jesus Christ must have the keeping of the house, as well as the sweeping of the house. Naturally, a man is unable to hold, to stand, and continue, though he do rise.

IV. Pray mark it, that you may see what an insufficiency there is unto what is good, that so we may be brought unto more dependance on Christ. As a man is unable to stand, and persevere: so also, he is unable to any one good work; spiritually, evangelically good. " We are not able (says the apostle) as of ourselves, to think a good thought, to speak a good word; but all our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iii. 5. And Bradwardine, he reasons the case very well: says he thus: If that a man bestow good breeding upon his child: the father gives the natural being to the child, he brings him up in military affairs, and the child grows very skilful, and the father furnishes him with all kind of armour: yet notwithstanding, if the child hath the prowess, and the valour of the action from himself he may boast in himself, and he may say, True indeed, I had my being from my father, I had, indeed, my skill from my father, I had my arms from my father: but the action is my own, the valour my own, the strength of the action is my own. So, says he, if God should give habitual grace to a man, if the strength for the action

should not be from God, he might boast; true indeed, I had the habit from God, the habitual grace from God, but the action is my own, the spirit of the action is my own: he had now wherein to boast. But all boasting is cut off, as you shall hear by and by. And therefore naturally a man is unable to every work: not only the habit is received; but strength for the action also, it is all received.

V. As a man is unable to every action: so also, he is naturally unable to prepare himself unto what is good, spiritually good. Good people, mark it, I say, a man is also unable to prepare himself unto what is good. Not only unable to do good, but unable to prepare himself unto what is good, spiritually good: not only unable to overcome the enemy, but unable to draw out his forces: not only unable to receive the enemy's charge, but he is unable to draw out his forces. "Ho, ho, every one that thirsteth, come and buy wine and milk, without money, or money's worth." Isa. lv. 1. If a man could prepare, here is money, here is money's worth. As one observes well, Then a man might say, the first beginning of my salvation was of myself, yea, in truth a man may say, The greatest part is from myself; for it is more to begin, and more to prepare; so the greatest part of our salvation should be from ourselves. Ye know what the Apostle says, and I pray consider it, in Ephesians ii. 1. "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Even you," at the 5th verse, "even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved." Mark, twice the Apostle brings in that sentence: he brings it in again at the 8th verse, "For by grace ye are saved." Why twice? not only to show that the progress of a Christian is by grace, but the very first beginning and setting out, it is all of grace: "By grace ye are saved." It is a good speech of Austin, Grace is no way grace, unless it be every way free. Now can a poor dead man prepare himself unto life? Did Lazarus prepare himself to life? Could he do it? Could Lazarus do it? There is, saith the philosopher, a proportion always between the action and the term of the action. Now what proportion is there between nature and grace? "No man," says our Saviour, "comes unto the Son, but whom the Father draws," John vi. 44. Thus says our Saviour. Oh! but says Pelagius, I can go unto Jesus Christ by my own preparation,

I can prepare, I can draw myself unto Jesus Christ, or I can draw Christ to me. Beloved! in natural actions, there needs always preparations to the introducing of forms, because in the way of generation of nature, things are wrought by degrees. As for example now: if a great log lie in the mud, before you carry it away, you must loosen it from the mud: but the log doth not loosen itself: and so, if wood be to be burnt, first it must be dried, there is preparing the wood to be burnt, because the thing is to be done by degrees, but in the conversion of a poor sinner, the work is done in a moment, it is no natural work; God infuses grace there; and therefore there needs no preparation there. And therefore Bradwardine, he reasons the case very well thus: If, says he, a man can prepare himself, then the preparation either helps forward, or causes the following grace; if it does not help forward, nor cause the following grace, then it does not prepare, that which does not help, does not prepare: and if it does help forward the following grace, or cause it, that God must give a following grace as a reward of this preparation; then surely, this preparation makes a man pleasing in the eyes of God, for, will God reward a man for a work that does not make him pleasing in the eyes of God? But how can a man be pleasing in the eyes of God, without faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Hebrews xi. 6. So that a man cannot prepare himself to what is good. Put all these together: a man cannot naturally overcome a sin, a temptation, though never so small: he cannot rise when he is fallen: he cannot stand though he should rise, yea, he is unable to any good work, simply in himself, and he is not able to prepare himself unto what is good. Surely therefore, all is in a way of receiving: whatever grace one hath, he hath it in a way of receiving. This is the first argument.

Secondly, This truth is also argued from the supernaturality of grace. Grace is a supernatural thing, and is called in scripture phrase, the seed of God: the image of Christ: the Divine nature: the good and perfect gift that comes from above, from the Father of lights. It is wrought in the soul by the infinite and almighty power of God! the same power wherewith God created heaven and earth at the first. And therefore it is called a creation, in Ephesians ii. 10, "We are his workmanship, created unto good works." The same

power that the Lord used in raising up Christ from the dead, is also put forth in the conversion of every sinner.

And besides, when the Lord is pleased to convert, and draw a poor sinner unto Himself, he does not always take those that are the best, those that are the wisest, those that are the most moral, civil men; he does not always take the most prudent: but many times the Lord takes the worst; Paul, Zaccheus, Matthew, the Jailor, divers others. And if you look into the xxxiiird chapter of Job, where you have the platform, indeed, of man's conversion: you shall find there, in what a time God takes a man to convert him: at the 14th verse; "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceives it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." When man least thinks of it, then God comes, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon a man, and in slumberings upon the bed. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. What does all this argue then? But that grace, grace is infused, grace is supernatural. Oh! there is a supernaturality in saving grace. Surely therefore, all is in a way of receiving, all is received. That is a second argument.

Thirdly, This truth is also argued, from the shortness of the means of grace. Much means of grace appointed, but take the means as it is in itself without God's appointment or institution upon it, and you will find that all means are too short to reach the end. For example; in the Old Testament, when the Lord would take in Jericho, and break down the walls of Jericho, he commands, "the ram's horns should be blown." Josh. vi. 4. Take the blowing of the ram's horns as lying under God's appointment, and so this action was sufficient for to break down the walls: but take the action of blowing the ram's horns by itself, and so it was too short. So the Lord commands Naaman to go and wash himself in the water of Jordan: 2 Kings v. 10. Take this action of Naaman washing himself in the water: take it, I say, without God's commandment: take it with God's commandment, God's appointment, so it was sufficient to reach his cure, and heal him of his leprosy: but now, take

the action as it was in itself, without the appointment and institution of God, and so it was too short to reach his cure. So in the New Testament: our Saviour, Christ, He takes spittle and clay for to cure a man's eyes. John ix. 6. Take this under Christ's appointment, and so it is sufficient to reach the cure; but take it without, and so short. So God did appoint in baptism, a man should be washed in water; and in the sacrament we should eat bread, and drink wine, for the begetting and increasing of faith. Take these actions as they lie under God's appointment and institution, they are able to reach this end. But take these actions as they are in themselves, washing in water and eating bread, and drinking wine, they are all too short; and too short either to beget or increase grace. Well now, why does the Lord still appoint such means, as in themselves are too short for the end whereto appointed? Surely, not only for this reason, that he might teach us, that the thing done is rather by the appointment, than bythe use of means: but also to show thus much: That though we do use the means, yet notwithstanding in the use of the means, we do not attain the thing by the use thereof, but that in the using of means, and waiting there, we shall receive strength from God to do it, to attain the end. Whensoever, therefore, you consider the shortness of the means appointed, conclude thus, that all is in a way of receiving: therefore God hath appointed the means that are in themselves short.

Fourthly. This doctrine is further argued from the work and nature of faith. There is no grace that the Scripture puts more upon than faith. Mark, I pray, in the Old Testament, all the victories are put on faith. In the New Testament, all the cures: if thou canst but believe, says Christ, "According to thy faith be it unto thee." Yea, beloved, if you look into the New Testament, you shall find that the same works that are given to Christ, are given to faith. Jesus Christ, he is said for to sanctify the soul: so doth faith. "Faith purifies the heart," says the apostle. Jesus Christ, he is said for to justify a sinner: so does faith too. "Being justified by faith." Romans v. Jesus Christ, he is said for to save the soul, he is called our Saviour: so doth faith too. By faith ye are saved. What is the reason now that the Lord does especially set the crown upon the head of

faith? Some think it is for this reason: because that faith doth unite the soul unto Jesus Christ: but so does love, love is an affection of union, and all grace unites to Christ; as every sin separates, so every grace unites. Others think it is for this reason, because that as faith sets the crown upon the head of Christ, so God sets the crown upon the head of faith; and this is true. For as the Lord does honour those persons most that honour him most: so he will honour those graces most that honour him most. But besides this, I conceive the great reason is this, why the Lord does thus set all over upon faith, I say, because that faith in the nature of it is a receiving grace. And therefore John having said in this ist chapter of John, and the 12th verse, "To as many as received him, he gave power to be called the sons of God;" explains himself by this afterward in the same verse, "even to them that believe on His name." So that believing is nothing else but receiving the grace of God: the nature of faith being to receive the truth, or the receiving of Jesus Christ: the proper work and nature of faith being to receive. Now therefore when the Lord does put all upon faith, and faith in its nature is a receiving; plainly it holds forth this truth unto us, that all is in a way of receiving: all grace in a way of receiving.

Fifthly and lastly, This truth is argued also, from the posture and true behaviour of prayer. Mark, prayer is nothing else, but the soul's begging or petitioning for something from heaven. A beggar you know, when he begs, he holds forth, or he stretches forth his hand: noting a willingness to receive. So you read in Scripture, that when the soul is put into a posture of prayer, it is put into this posture. Read, therefore, what is said in Job xi. 13, "If thou prepare thine heart," or establish thine heart, for so the word signifies, "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him." That is, if thou doest pray unto Him, thou stretchest out thine hands unto Him. Now as one observes well: as it were a derision or a mocking of God, to praise God, or to give God thanks for that which he does not give, but I have in my own power: so it were also a mocking of God, to pray to God for that which is not in His hands to give, but in mine to do. Now, my beloved, whatever grace or holiness a man hath, he is to pray for: pray for healing strength; pray for quickening strength; pray for confirming

strength; pray for strength to pray: and seeing the posture of prayer is this, to stretch forth the hands, which notes receiving, in that we are for to beg all grace from God: it argues, all is in a way of receiving, all, all good is in a way of receiving: whatever grace or holiness a man hath on this side heaven, it is all in a way of receiving.

But you will say, that this cuts off all endeavour; if all be in a way of receiving, then nothing to be done? This doctrine is an enemy to all obedience, to all labouring, to all good works, and to all performance, to all endeavour.

I answer, not so. The apostle expressly does speak the contrary, as you may read, and I pray mark, in the iind chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians: "Wherefore," at the 12th verse, says he, "my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence: work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Why? at the 13th verse. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will, and to do, of His good pleasure." Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: why? for all is in a way of receiving; it is God, it is God that worketh all in all; it is God, it is God that does it, therefore work. Mark, how the apostle argues: he does not argue, as many do: And I pray tell me if there be any here that think this doctrine is against endeavour; pray tell me, what work or endeavour? Either you would endeavour for to leave your sins; or you would endeavour to do what is good, to perform some good. If you would endeavour for to leave your sins: there is no such way, as to be truly, fully persuaded in your heart of this truth: that all is in a way of receiving. Mark, therefore I pray, how the Apostle argues for that purpose, in the 1 Corinthians iii. 3. For, says he "Ye are carnal; ye are carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" Well, but what course does the apostle take to cure this carnality? See what he says, at the 6th verse: at the 5th, "Who then is Paul? who is Paul? and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man: I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth anything,

neither is he that watereth, but God that gives the increase." As if he should say thus: Here is divisions among you; and one says, I am for Paul; and I am for Apollos: oh! but get your heart settled in this truth, that all is of God, and all is of Christ, and all is in a way of receiving; and then divisions will be no more; there will be no more such sayings as these, I am for Paul, and I am for Apollos.

And again, would your endeavours be for the performance of what is good? The consideration of this truth that is now before you, is of great avail this way too. Says Paul, "I have laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of Christ in me," 1 Cor. xv. 10. Mark, "yet not I, but the grace of Christ in me." Laboured more than they all, more abundantly than all, yet all from Christ, and yet all from grace, and yet all in a way of receiving. Surely, there is no such way to gracious and blessed endeavours, as the serious consideration of this truth that is now before you.

I will give you two reasons for it:

All actions are carried upon two wheels, fear and love. As a cart moves upon two wheels; so every action is carried upon these two, fear and love. The more ye love, the more ye move towards a thing: the more ye fear, the more ye move to avoid it: fear and love the two great wheels of every motion. Now as for love, what greater love than this: that Jesus Christ hath died for us, and worketh all our works for us, and in us; and love causeth love. As for fear, ye know there are some children, so long as they are kept in dependance upon the father, the father having not given them portions, they are obedient to him; but if once the children have gotten their portions, and are come to live by themselves, then no more obedience. If you have a man by the wrist, and he knows that if you let him go, he falls down into some great river, and there he is lost for ever: will not this man that you have by the wrist, will not he be afraid now to offend you, knowing you have him thus by the wrist? Beloved! this doctrine tells us that the Lord hath us all by the wrist; we live in a continual dependance upon Him; and all is in a way of receiving, will not this make us to fear the Lord then? The Prophet Jeremiah, in the vth chap. 24th verse, he wonders that the people should not fear the Lord upon this ground, That the Lord gave them the former and the latter rain. "And,"

says he, "they have not feared the Lord, that hath given them rain, the former and the latter rain." As if he should say thus: These poor people they depend upon God for rain, and is it not a strange thing that they should not fear him? Why, beloved, there is not one drop of spiritual rain or dew of grace that falls upon the heart, but we live in dependance upon God for it; shall not this make us fear?

Again, besides, Whatsoever service you tender unto God on this side heaven, it is all a waiting upon God. And therefore, the saints that serve God, in Scripture they are said to wait on God. Mark I pray you, our service is a waiting upon God: "But those that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength," says Isaiah xl. 31. Now if a man hear that if he have no oil in his lamp, he is lost for ever; and there is no way to get oil, but by setting his vessels under God's spout, and God's ordinance: will not this make a man to wait upon him? Some there are that defer their repentance, and they think to repent afterward, they think they shall be able to repent afterward: but now, when a soul shall hear that all is in a way of receiving; he must take it, therefore, when God does offer it; then he concludes thus; is it so indeed, that all is in a way of receiving? strength to repent, it is by receiving, then will I take, while the Lord offers me strength. Oh! I will never defer my repentance again, I will now wait upon God, and now while the Lord offers, now I will take it. Thus you see this doctrine is a friend unto all endeavour. All is in a way of receiving; no such friend unto good endeavour as this doctrine.

But you will say unto me, Why hath the Lord cast things into this mould, that all should be in a way of receiving?

Besides the reason, that mercy may be sure unto all his servants, which they would soon spend if it were in their own keeping. Mark I pray, there are these two or three reasons of God's proceeding this way, that all grace should be in a way of receiving.

I. And the first is: That all boasting, rejoicing, confidence in one's self may be taken away. "If Abraham (says Paul in the ivth of the Romans) were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, though not before God:" he hath whereof to glory. But now, when all is in a way of receiving, there is no room for boasting. Mark therefore,

what is said in 1 Cor. iv. 7. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why doest thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" God cannot endure boasting, cannot endure self-confidence, God cannot endure that a man should glory in any thing in himself: therefore all, all is in a way of receiving. This is God's reasoning.

II. Again, God hath so ordered things in the dispensations of his grace under the gospel, that Jesus Christ may be fully honoured, exalted. No such way to honour Christ as this, that all should come out of his hands, to be received from him. Pray, was it not a great honour to Joseph in the time of the famine in Egypt, that no bread, but should come through his hands? not a corn of grain, but should come through his hands? So here: when no grace, no strength, no aid, no assistance, no supplies, but all through the hand of Christ, all in a way of receving: does not this glorify Christ much? What is it, I pray, that makes the sun so glorious a creature, above all the creatures in the world; but this, that all the creatures depend upon him for light and for warmth? This is that which makes the Lord Jesus Christ glorious, that all must be in a way of receiving from Jesus Christ.

III. God hath so ordered things in the dispensations of his grace under the gospel, that the saints and children of God may live by faith. Good people mark it, some there are, some creatures in the world, that do live by sense: as the beasts, and beastly men. Some creatures there are that do live by reason, moral men: but the Lord would have his children to live by faith: that as the men of the world do live by sense and reason; so the Lord would have all his children to live by faith. What way or means to bring a soul off for to live by faith? Establish this doctrine, let this be a statute made in the churches, all in a way of receiving: Aye, says a poor soul, is it so indeed? What? all in a way receiving? Then I see a necessity of living by faith: O Lord, teach me now for to live by faith.

Thus you see the doctrine clearly proved by reason to you. I shall not be able to reach the use of the point, so as I intended.

The doctrine is exceeding useful, full of spiritual use: yet

though I shall not be able to do what I would, give me leave for to make some application of the point; and so will I wind up all.

I. Is this doctrine true, that all, all is in a way of receiving? Then behold what infinite care the great God of heaven and earth hath of believers, of every believing soul, though he be never so mean! Would you not think, that if a mother were so tender of her child, that she would not let her child eat a bit of bread, but it should be of her own cutting; that she would not let it drink, a drop of drink but it should be of her own drawing: would you not think this mother, this woman were very careful of her child? Beloved! thus the case stands: no grace, no assistance, no help for duty, no help against sin; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself will have the cutting of it, the Lord Jesus Christ will have the giving of it out; he will have the drawing of it all; all in a way of receiving. Oh! what care! Oh! what infinite care hath God of poor believers! When the Lord would commend his care of the children of Israel unto them; pray mark what an argument he uses in Deut. xi. 10, 11, 12. "For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, it is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs." They fetched water out of the river Nilus, and so they watered the land of Egypt with their feet. But, says he at the 11th verse, "The land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven:" not taken out of the river, and watered by men's feet, as Egypt was. "A land (says the Lord) which the Lord thy God careth for:" a land which the Lord thy God careth for: he cared not for Egypt. How does he prove that the Lord cared for it? "The eyes of the Lord thy God are always on it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year." He giveth rain from heaven, and when your land wants water, it is given from heaven, it is not watered by men's feet, it is not watered as Egypt was watered, which land God cared not for. So now, there are some people in the world that water themselves, that go forth in their own strength, that have moral virtues, and they water their hearts with their own feet, as I may say, the Lord cares not for those, the Lord cares not for such.

Oh! but give me a soul that hath rain from heaven, that lives in a continual dependance, that acknowledges that all is received, that lives upon heaven; the Lord cares for such a soul. Now this is the condition of all the saints, of every believer, he hath all in a way of receiving: oh! the infinite care that the Lord hath of every believer though he be never so mean.

II. Is this doctrine true, all in a way of receiving? Then behold, what sweet, and comfortable, and pleasant lives the saints live, believers have. When you look upon a godly man and consider what great works he does, and what hard things he bears, what great afflictions he goes through: you say, Good Lord! how is man able to do, or bear all this? Paul and Silas, singing in the stocks, when they were whipped and scourged, and the blood running down their shoulders; and yet singing: how? how are they able to do all, to bear all? Lo here, here is the reason: they have all in a way of receiving. When you see the little child run by the father in his hand, in a green meadow, you say, the child hath a fine, and a sweet time: but when you see the child coming at a high gate, or stile to get over, or dirty lane to pass over; now, ye say, how will the child do now? Why? surely the child will do as well and better now, if the father takes the child up in his arms, the dirty lane will be the pleasantest place to the child, when it is taken up into the father's arms. Thus it is with the saints: great works they do, and hard things they go through: oh! but they are taken up in Christ's arms, and they have all in a way of receiving. When you look upon a man that does keep a great table, hath many servants attending on him, his purse always full of money; you will say, surely, this man leads a fine, and a sweet life; if it do not cost him much for to receive it or get this money: but if you hear that he hath all his estate, only for telling his money, his great pains is all in receiving his money: oh! here is a blessed man indeed, and here is a happy man you think presently! Thus it is; the great pains of a christian is to receive from Christ, and to spend for Christ. Oh! what a sweet life do the saints live, that live by faith in Jesus Christ.

III. Is this doctrine true? Then what abundance are there in the world, many that live under the gospel, that

from hence are argued to have no saving interest in Jesus Christ. Good people, mark it that I say, are not savingly united to Jesus Christ. There is a two-fold union with Christ; as Christ is considered two ways: he is either considered with his church, the church and he making one body; and so all together are called, Christ: in 1 Cor xii. Or else he is considered as the great Mediator, and Saviour of believers by himself. Accordingly men may be said to be united to him, either outwardly in the church, tied and related to him by outward ordinances: or else inwardly united to him by saving faith. When a man is inwardly united to Jesus Christ by saving faith; he hath all from Christ: strength unto every duty from Jesus Christ: praying strength, and hearing strength, and repenting strength, and confirming strength, he hath from Christ in a way of receiving. But the other hath little, or nothing from Christ: pray mark it; I will express it thus: a man takes a piece of bread, or a loaf of bread; he ties it to his arm; his arm hath no strength from that, it is but an outward tie to his arm, it hath no strength from that: and it argues that it is but an outward tie, it causes no strength by it. But if a man take bread, and eat it, that there be an inward union, then there is strength, there is bread goes to all the parts: you know my meaning. Or thus; I will express it thus: Take a graft, and tie it unto a tree, tie it unto a stock, and it brings forth no fruit at all; why because it is but outwardly tied unto the root, unto the stock of the tree: but take the branch, and graft it into the tree, into the stock: then it brings forth all that it brings forth by virtue of the stock that it is grafted into. So, my beloved, there is a company, there is a generation of people that live here under the gospel, that are outwardly tied unto Christ: they are baptized, they have the name of Christ by profession; and by the tie of the ordinances, they are outwardly tied unto Christ: but, oh! they receive nothing from him, nothing from him: pray, what do they receive? Suppose Christ had not come into the world, suppose they had never heard Christ preached; they might have lived civilly; they might have lived justly among their neighbours; they might have abstained from lying and drunkenness: why, they do not thus much; poor creatures nothing from Christ, they receive nothing from Christ: oh!

these are but outwardly tied, as a loaf of bread is tied to a man's arm; so is the Lord Jesus in the ordinances tied unto them. Aye, but then, there are another people that are savingly united to Jesus Christ; and these, they have strength from him: they cannot pray but as they have strength from Christ; they cannot confer and speak of good things but as they have strength from Christ; they cannot go and hear a sermon, with any affection, but as they have strength from Christ: all, all in a way of receiving. Oh! they stand in a way of dependance upon God in him, and they have all from Christ; these are savingly united to Christ. But oh! many that live among us have not all from Christ; certainly, therefore, there are many that are not savingly united to Jesus Christ. This is a third. I will add but one more, and so I have done.

IV. Is this doctrine true?—All in a way of receiving. Then surely, beloved, all is of grace, from first to last. Heaven, heaven is a donative, salvation is a donative, every step in the ladder to heaven is grace, every link of the chain is grace. Oh! every beam of our day is grace; every stone of our building is grace. Is all in a way of receiving? What, praying strength? What, hearing strength? What, suffering strength? What is all, all in a way of receiving? Oh, then, what glorious grace is here! Oh, rich grace! Oh, free grace! Oh, incomparable riches of the freeness of God's grace in Christ! Is the Lord Jesus the Alpha and the Omega? Is he the beginning, the middle, the end of all our actions? Oh, what grace is here! If there be ever a drooping soul, if there be ever a poor, hard heart, a cold heart, a frozen heart in all this congregation, come, O poor soul, come and warm thine heart at this fire of love. Were our heaven and our salvation put to sale upon our doing; I say, were mercy set to sale at our doing, then we were in a sad condition, we were in a lamentable condition. Well, now, is all in a way of receiving? What, then, though I cannot pray for the present. What, then, though my heart be dead for the present. Yet, notwithstanding, I will wait upon the Lord in the way of his ordinances; it may be this day, and this time, I may receive something that may put life into my poor dead soul. Oh! you that never waited upon the Lord, and upon free grace, wait now upon the

Lord: you that have waited, wait still; you that never waited, wait now. Beloved, the more dependant our condition is, the more depending should our spirits be. What more dependant condition can you think of: all, all in a way of receiving. Oh! therefore, now let us all labour to live by faith. Go away with this in your bosoms: I see a necessity of living in a continual dependance on God in Christ. Which that you may do, think of all these things, and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON IV.

"And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace."
JOHN I. 16.

I HAVE made entrance upon these words in some neighbouring congregations, in the hearing of divers of you; and my desire is to finish them here.

Having spoken of the former part of the verse, "And of his fulness have all we received:" I come now unto the latter clause, "Even grace for grace."

The great question is upon these words, What should be the meaning of them?

There are no less than seven or eight interpretations that are given by men. I shall presently tell you what I apprehend to be the meaning of them.

Three things, I conceive, may be specially held forth in these words:

First, They may note, an abundance of grace that the saints in the New Testament have from Jesus Christ.

Secondly, The universality of grace.

And, Thirdly, An answerableness of grace in every christian unto the graces of Jesus Christ.

I begin with the former at this time.

First, They seem to note an abundance of grace. "Of his fulness all we have received, even grace for grace:" that is, abundance of grace.

This interpretation, that I might clear up the meaning before I come to that which I intend to press, it suits with the

like phrase of Scripture: "Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. You know the place. That is, a man will give all his skins, all his cattle and skins (for their estates in those times did lie in cattle much), he will give all his skins, though they be never so many, he will give them all for to save his life. Skin for skin, though he have never so many; skin for skin, abundance of skins. Grace for grace, and abundance of grace. *Gratia gratiis accumelata.*

This also suits with the word, and or even. It is not barely said thus, And of his fulness have all we received, grace for grace; but, "Of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace." That is, in great abundance; we have not only received grace, but we have received much grace, even grace for grace. This also suits with the title, the attribute that is here given to Christ, and that is, Fulness. When God or Christ is mentioned in Scripture, they are mentioned still under such a title as suits with the matter that is in hand; and you may know what the matter in hand is by the title. Now the title that is here given to Christ, the attribute that is here given to Christ, is Fulness; answerable to that is, fulness of grace in us, or abundance of grace from him. This also suits with the scope of the place; for here the evangelist sets Christ above Moses, shows how Christ does go beyond Moses; the following verse coming in as a reason of this: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," John i. 17, 18. You have much by Moses, but you have more by Christ; you have abundance of grace in Christ.

This also is agreeable to other Scriptures, where the same matter is spoken of. If you look into the vth of the Romans, you shall find that the apostle, speaking of the free gift of grace, at the 15th verse says, that it hath abounded unto many: "Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." Would you have the word received, joined with abundance? Look into the 17th verse, and there you read, "For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of

the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." All these things being thus laid together, they argue unto me, the main and special thing that is here intended is, an abundance of grace: "Of whose fulness we have all received, even grace for grace." All the saints and people of God under the New Testament, do receive abundance of grace from Jesus Christ.

First, Abundance of grace discovered.

Secondly, Abundance of grace exhibited and communicated to all the saints. He that hath the least measure of gospel grace, hath abundance of grace from Jesus Christ.

Abundance of grace is now discovered. That I may make that appear:

I. It will appear, if you consider the several advances that grace hath made, from the beginning of the world to this day, upon the children of men. In the beginning God made man perfect and righteous, after his own image. Man falling from that estate, exposed himself and all his posterity to the wrath of God for ever. Then grace steps in, and makes its first advance in the world: "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head," Gen. iii. 15. Here Christ is preached, and preached to the greatest sinners, Adam and Eve, that had damned all the world; and Jesus Christ is preached immediately by God himself. One would think now that the Lord should rather have said to Adam: Adam, I made thee perfect and righteous, thou mightest have kept thee so; thou wouldest not trust to me, Adam; thou wouldest trust unto the devil; go now, now thou art fallen, go mend thyself, if thou canst find out a better master, Adam. Or if the Lord would have shown mercy to Adam, one would think that he should have stayed for Adam's repentance, that Adam should first a cried him mercy. No, but before ever this poor prodigal stirs one step unto his father, his father runs out to meet him, to overtake him; the Lord Christ is preached, the promise is propounded, the free grace of God is revealed. Here was the first advance that ever grace made into the world.

But God, who is rich in grace, was not satisfied with this; but, as in the fourth day he does gather up all the light that was scattered abroad in the world before, into one body, the sun; so now he does gather up all the beams of his grace

into one body, the covenant which he does make with Abraham: And unto Abraham he says, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed," Gen. xii. 3. "In thy seed (says the apostle); he does not say seeds, but seed, meaning Christ," Gal. iii. 16. Abraham saw so much of Christ, that our Lord says, "He saw His day, and rejoiced in it," John viii. 56. Here the sun was gotten higher; for now, though Christ was preached to Adam, the promise was propounded; yet notwithstanding, it was but barely propounded to Adam, it was not applied, and propounded in obscure terms to Adam too; and rather given threatening-wise against Satan, than promise-wise concerning them. But now the Lord does professedly come and apply the promise unto Abraham: "And in thy seed;" which he does not give unto Abraham as Abraham, as that person, but as a common person for all believers. Here was now a second advance that grace made into the world.

But the Lord was not yet satisfied with this, but causes his grace to advance higher in Moses' time; and unto Moses he speaks expressly, "A prophet will I raise up like unto thee," Deut. xviii. 15, and I will put my name in him, he shall be called God and Jehovah as I am. Then the Lord proclaimed before Moses, himself to be "the Lord, gracious, merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, reserving mercy for thousands." Then the Lord gave the law; and lest they should think that God intended it as a covenant of works, he did at the same time give the ceremonial law, that thereby they might read the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, for any sin they should commit against the moral law. Here was a higher advance.

But because this was still under-veiled, and it is a pain to love to conceal itself; the Lord does make a further revelation of his grace, of Christ, by his servant David: for after David and Solomon's time, we read of the eternal generation of Christ, Prov. viii.; of the incarnation of Christ, Psalm xl. 7, "Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book," says the Psalmist; of the death and sufferings of Christ, Psalm xxii. 1, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and divers other Psalms; of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the cxviiith Psalm, and the xvith Psalm, "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;" of all the three

offices of Jesus Christ; his Kingly office, Psalm ii., "Yet will I set my King upon my holy hill;" his Prophetical office, "He shall declare the decree," Psalm ii. 7; and his Priestly office, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek," Psalm cx.: of the ascension of Jesus Christ, Psalm lxviii., "He hath ascended on high, and received gifts for men:" of the sitting at the right-hand of God the Father, Psalm cx., "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right-hand." Thus you see in David's time the gospel had advanced further, had gotten a great deal of ground.

But the Lord was not yet contented, but causes more of his grace to break forth in the times of the prophets; more concerning Christ. He tells them of the very time Christ should be born, Dan. ix. Of the place where he should be born: "at Bethlehem," Micah v. 2. The person that should bear him: "A virgin shall conceive," Isa. vii. 14. Gives them divers characters whereby they should know him when he came: "And I will send my messenger before him, The voice of one crying in the wilderness," Mal. iii. 1; Isa. xl. 3. He will ride upon an ass's colt: "Behold thy King comes riding upon an ass's colt," Zech. ix. 9. He shall be sold for "thirty pieces of silver," says the prophet Zechariah, chap. xi. 12. He shall die, not for his own sins but our's: "The chastisement of our peace shall be upon him," Isa. liii. 5. And, as if all this were not enough, the Lord speaks out the covenant of grace expressly in Jer. xxxi. 31: "The days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." At the 33rd verse: "This shall be the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; they all shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." What a mighty advance had grace made now. Is there any more yet? Yes, our Saviour himself comes, and then grace advances higher, by much higher; then grace enlarges her quarters, extending itself unto all the world, go teach all nations: "Go, teach all nations," says

our Saviour. Matt. xxviii. 19. That house of Israel would serve such a candle as Moses was; but when the Sun arises, no less than the whole world for him to display his beams upon. He had set up a school of grace in that corner of the world, in Jewry: but when the Lord Jesus himself comes, a free-school is set up, the school of free grace for all the children of men to come unto: Go, teach all nations.

II. Yea, in the second place, although our Saviour Christ did go unto our forefathers, the Jews, and preach unto them by his Spirit; he came to them as Joseph to his brethren at the first, in a hidden way, under a veil: but now the veil of the temple is rent asunder, and the most common people may see into the holy of holiest: "Now we all, with open face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18. The Jews, they had the shadows, and we have, as it were, the picture, but the substance, the thing, it is yet to come. These three ye find in that 1st verse of the xth chapter to the Hebrews: "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the thing." Here is the shadow, and here is the image, and here is the thing itself: "the thing itself is yet to come." They indeed had the shadow, but we have the image: and look how much an image, or the picture of a man, goes beyond a shadow; so much does the discovery of Christ now, go beyond the discoveries of him then. Luther says, The whole world is but one day, as it were; and as the evening and the morning made the day, so, says he, our forefathers the Jews, they had the evening, but we have the morning.

III. Again, though there were many doctrines of grace and mercy communicated to our fore-fathers the Jews: yet notwithstanding they were so tempered with the law, that the very gospel seemed to be law to them: as now, we have the law among us, but it is so tempered with the gospel; that the law itself is gospel-wise to us. They had Christ in the hand of Moses, and we have Moses in the hand of Christ. A mighty difference: as we have a baptized, and a christian Moses; so they had a circumcised, and a Mosaical Christ. They had grace in the hand of the law. And therefore you shall observe, that when the Lord appeared unto them in a way of greatest mercy, he appeared still with tokens of majesty, and greatness: but now we have grace in

the hand of grace; we have grace with the tokens of grace, and with the tokens of love. And this difference the apostle makes out clearly, in the xiith of the Hebrews, from the 18th unto the 25th verses.

IV. Again, though they had many doctrines of grace, and of free grace; yet themselves were not made free thereby; but they were as the children of the bond-woman; they were not free from ceremonial rites. They had the free use of the creature: their hearts were not free and enlarged towards God. Indeed, those that were godly among them, they were children: "But (as the apostle speaks) they being under age, they differed not from servants ordinarily: but when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son; that we might receive the adoption of sons: and the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 1, 4, 5, 6. They had the spirit of bondage unto fear; and we have the Spirit of adoption unto love, to cry, Abba, Father. They could not go to God, but with many fears: but there is none of all the saints now, but go with a spirit of love, go to God as a Father: every saint now, may go to God and say, Father, Father, I labour under such a temptation; oh! Father, help me: I want such a blessing, or mercy, oh! Father give it me.

V. Again further, although they had many sprinklings of the doctrines of grace; yet they fell but droppingly upon them; now a drop, and then a drop: as you have it in the ist chapter of the Hebrews, 1st verse, "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets; hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." God who by piece-meals, drop by drop; now a drop and then a drop, spake unto our forefathers by the prophets; hath in these last times spoke unto us by his Son. This being the opposition, shews, that God spake perfectly, and spake all by his Son. When this king came, then all the cocks run with wine. Some observe that Jesus Christ preached the gospel more plainly unto one poor ignorant, sinful, wicked woman, that ye read of in the ivth of John; than he did unto all our forefathers under the Old Testament: for unto which of all our forefathers did he say, I am the Messiah, "Ask of me the water of life, and I will give it thee?" You know the great doctrines of the gospel,

justification by grace; free remission of sins; and the like. Now though these doctrines be in the Old Testament, yet take your book, and how many leaves shall you read over, before you be able to read this doctrine clearly? But open your book where you will, open in the New Testament, and you shall meet with one every where; with this doctrine, the great doctrine of free grace every where. Oh! much, much of Jesus Christ, and of his grace that is now discovered; surely abundance of grace, abundance of grace discovered to the saints now, and to all the saints.

But in the Second place. As there is abundance of grace discovered: so there is abundance of grace exhibited, and communicated to all the saints. Those that have the least measure of grace now, have abundance of grace. That is the thing that I would clear up to you. That those that have the least measure of gospel grace, they receive grace for grace, they have abundance of grace.

I. Is it not a great matter for an ungodly man to be justified? What man so godly, but he was ungodly before justified?

II. Is it not a great matter for a man to be the son of God? to be the child of God? All God's children shall be portioned answerable to their Father's estate: David counted it a great mater to be son-in-law to a king, though but a wicked king, and the kingdom but small. What is it then to be adopted to be the son of God, the daughter of God? "To as many as receive him, he gives power to be called the sons of God," John i. 12. And there is this difference between God's adoption, and man's: when man does adopt one to be his son, he may put his name upon him; he may give his estate to him: but he cannot make the person to be like himself; he cannot communicate his nature to him. But now, when God does adopt one to be his child, he does not only put his name upon the soul, and give him a great estate; but he makes him to be like himself, and communicates his nature to him. So says the apostle, "We are made partakers of the divine nature," 2 Pet i. 4.

III. Is it not a great matter, to have the image of Jesus Christ drawn upon a filthy soul? To have one's heart inclined, naturally inclined, as it were, unto all the commandments of the gospel? "I will write my law in your heart,"

Jer. xxxi. 33, says God, in the covenant of grace. That look as the heathen, having the law of nature written in their hearts, are naturally inclined unto the works of nature. So will I write my law of grace in your hearts, and you shall be naturally inclined unto the works of grace, and unto the works of the gospel. He that hath least of Christ, he hath all Christ; all Christ imputed unto all the saints. Beloved! we have not so much of Christ in our lives as Peter, and Paul, and John had: but we have as much of Christ's righteousness imputed to us for our justification as any of all the apostles had: and if our faith be right it is like precious with theirs.

IV. Is it not a great matter, for a man to be in heaven before he comes there? To have eternal life in the world? "This is eternal life, to know thee, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ," John xvii. 3. And that day that any soul begins to know Jesus Christ; that day is the day-break of his eternity: the saints that are in heaven, they count from that day; there began our eternity; this is eternal life, here it begins. All the saints and people of God, they do know God in Jesus Christ. And therefore surely, there is an abundance of grace, grace for grace, an abundance of grace communicated, and given out unto all the saints under the New Testament.

But you will say unto me: We do not find this in experience, do not see such an abundance of grace in the lives of those ye count godly; those that are in Christ indeed, we do not find that they have such an abundance of grace?

I answer, Aye, but do you consider the opposition of grace: the retinue of grace: and the mystery of grace.

I. For the opposition of grace. A little grace may be much opposed: and when the opposition is great, though grace be small in the bulk, it may be great in the work: though little in the quantity, yet it may be be much in quality. There is no true gospel-grace, but it is much opposed. When Jesus Christ came into the world, you know Herod raised all the country upon him: and so when Christ comes into the heart, the whole soul it is raised against him, because he comes as an enemy unto the soul. As when an enemy lands, the beacons are all fired, and the country all rises;

what do you say? An enemy is landed, an enemy is landed, and all the country rises. So when Christ lands upon a soul, at the first, he lands as an enemy unto the sin and soul; and all the soul, the region, the continent, it rises up against him.

Then also, as the dragon stood before the woman, which you read of in that of the Revelations, to cut off the child as soon as it was born: so the devil stands before the soul, to cut of the soul's birth.

Then also comes in the power of all relations; and the power of all engagements; and the power of all former customs; and the power of an evil nature: nay, if you will go this way to work, then farewell all friends; and farewell all your former pleasures; and farewell all preferment. Was it not a great matter for Job to be upright in the Land of Uz? why? because there was much opposition in it. Is it not a great matter for a little poor bark or vessel to live at sea in the time of a storm? for a little spark of fire to live in much water? for a little light to live in a great wind? You look upon such a poor gracious soul, and you do not consider the wind that blows upon it, the storms that beat upon it; and you say, It is not much grace he hath, or much good he does. Oh, but consider, if you would consider the great opposition the soul meets withal, then you will say, Oh, it is much indeed, there is abundance of grace there.

II. Consider the retinue of grace: grace hath a great retinue, though it be very mean, it hath a rich retinue. If a man hath but a poor cottage, an acre of land, an half acre of land, a rood: yet if it be an earnest of a great inheritance, it is much. Look upon the little cottage in itself, or the rood of land in itself, it is not much, but consider it as an earnest of a great inheritance, so it is much. Beloved! whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it but as an earnest. Ye read of the testimony of the Spirit! the earnest of the Spirit; all the grace that the saints have on this side heaven, it is all but the earnest of what they shall have. And the apostle he blesses God for this, as ye read in Colossians i. 12. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:" Mark, here are three things especially considerable in these words; all the children of God have an inheritance. You have but one

heir to your estate, all are not heirs: but all God's children have an inheritance. And the inheritance called an inheritance of light: it does not lie in a dark, foggy, and fenny, and moorish place, it is a comfortable inheritance, it is an inheritance of light. And the apostle, he does here give thanks unto God, that had made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. He does not here give thanks unto God for the inheritance; but that they were meet to be partakers of the inheritance; that they had an earnest: till the inheritance came. I say, all the grace which a godly man hath on this side heaven, it is but an earnest: you look upon it as it is in itself, and you say; it is not much: Aye, but look upon it as an earnest, but as an earnest, and then you will say, it is much indeed, Oh, it is much indeed.

III. But then especially; consider the mystery of grace: grace is a mystery, Ye read in Scripture of the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of godliness; godliness is not only a mystery in the general, but all the parts of godliness are mysterious; there is a mystery in every part; and if you would but a little consider the mystery of grace, I dare say, you would lift up your hands and say then, O! what abundance of grace is here, even in the weakest saint!

1. For example, to instance. Ye say it is no great matter, for a man or woman to tremble before the word, it is more than many a one does; many come and sit out sermons, and never tremble before the word. Well, but you say, it is no great matter to tremble before the word, to tremble at the word. Aye, but for a man to tremble at the word, and yet to count it as honey, and the honey-comb; to tremble at the word, and yet to love it and prize it then, and look upon it as the honey and the honey-comb; this is much: now ye shall have a poor soul, a poor Christian, come and tremble before the word, and yet look upon the word as the honey, even as honey, and the honey-comb, for sweetness. This is much.

2. Again. You count it no great matter for one to love the ordinances, so to love the ordinances above all the world, as to be willing to part with all the world, rather than to part with them; this is a great matter. But may be, you will say, this is no great matter. Well, but for a man or a woman to think so; so to love the ordinances, and yet notwithstanding at the same time to think that he does not profit, that he is

barren, and gets little or no good thereby: this is much. Now thus you shall have it with a poor Christian; love, and prize the ordinances, and would not part with the ordinances for all the world, and yet at the same time complain, and say, Oh! I get little good thereby. Here is a mystery. Put all together; you take things asunder, and therefore you think it is not much.

3. Again. You think it is no great matter for a man to comfort himself in this, That the Lord knows his heart. Aye, but for a man to comfort himself in that, and yet say, there is much hypocrisy there; and the same day, it may be, say; Oh! I am an hypocrite. Thus you shall have it with many a poor, gracious, drooping soul. All is naught; O my heart, it is full of hypocrisy; and I am but an hypocrite; and yet now, let him be charged or accused by men of the world, for such and such designs; he comforts himself in this: Oh, but blessed be the Lord, the Lord knows my heart. Put these things together.

4. Again. You will say, it is no great matter for a man to look into his own heart; so to look into his own heart, and so to be sensible of his sin, as to think he shall perish for ever. Aye, but, for the same person, to profess he would not change his condition with another for all the world; this is much. Take many a poor drooping soul, and thus it is: I am afraid I shall go to hell, and perish to all eternity. But now come and lay his condition to a drunkard, to an adulterer; says he, I profess I would not change my condition with that man for all the world, at the same time. Here is a mystery! it is strange but there is a mystery in every piece of godliness: and if you would but consider, it would appear that there is much grace in those that have least.

5. Again. You say it is no great matter for a man to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. Aye, but for the same person to rely upon Jesus Christ only for salvation. This is much. Now thus it is, you shall have a godly man work, work with fear and trembling, as if he would earn heaven with his fingers' ends, and yet he relies upon Jesus Christ only for his salvation.

6. Further. You say it is no great matter for a man to walk closely with God. But it is a great matter. It may be you will say it is not. Aye, but for a man to walk closely

with God, and yet to be in the dark; to walk exactly, and yet to be in a crowd, and throng of business. Who can walk exactly in the dark? and who can walk exactly in a crowd, when he is carried to and fro in a crowd? Thus now, you shall have a godly, gracious man, walk exactly with God, closely with God, and yet may be in the dark; a child of light, and yet in the dark; and in a crowd of occasions and business, and yet walk exactly: this is much.

7. Again. You will say, it is no great matter for a man to be diligent in his particular calling. Aye, but for the same person, for to take no thought, no dividing thought, what he shall eat, or drink, or put on; and yet be diligent in his particular calling, this is much. Now so it is, you shall have a godly, gracious soul, taking no care, no dividing care what he shall eat, or drink, or what he shall put on: and yet diligent in his particular calling.

8. Again. You will say, it is no great matter for a man to grieve for sin past, and to strive against sin for the time to come. Aye, but for the same person to know that his sin past is pardoned; and to know that if he fall into a sin for the time to come, God will work good out of it, it shall be for his gain, God will over-rule it so; and yet strive against it as the greatest evil in the world; this is much. Now thus it is, a gracious soul knows his sin is pardoned, yet he grieves for it: and he knows that if he shall fall into a sin, the Lord will over-rule things so, as he shall be the better for it; and yet he strives against his sin, as the greatest evil in the world. Here is a mystery! this is much.

9. Again. You will say, it is no great matter for a man to be quiet under his affliction, because it does come from God; for that reason: aye, but for the same person to be more sensible, and to be the more afflicted, because it does come from God; this is much. Beloved, you shall have these two meet together: a godly, gracious soul, he is therefore quiet under affliction, because it does come from God; and he is therefore the more sensible of his affliction, because it does come from God. Here is a mystery! put these together, and you will say, Things rise high.

10. I will instance but in one more, and that is a tenth. You will say, it is no great matter for a man to be contented with his condition: to be contented with his condition when

it is mean, and when it is poor. Aye, but for the same person to desire a better, and pray for a better, and to pray earnestly for a better, and yet be contented with his condition though it be never so mean: this is much. Thus it is with the saints, a child of God, being in a mean condition, he desires a better; he prays to God for a better, and he prays earnestly to God for a better; and yet he is contented with his condition though it be never so mean: pray, and pray earnestly, and yet contented with his condition, though it be never so mean. Thus, my beloved, oh, there is a mystery, there is a mystery in every piece of godliness: and you look not upon things under the mysterious notion, and you say, It is no great matter that is in the life of such an one. Oh, but if you would look upon things under this notion, and consider the mystery of godliness, and every piece thereof, you would lift up your hands, and say, Oh! surely he that hath the least measure of gospel grace, hath abundance of grace: he that hath but the least degree of grace, hath abundance of grace; of Christ's fulness. Now under the New Testament we have received not sparingly, not scantly, but grace for grace, and abundance of grace: he that hath but the least measure, hath received much, hath received abundance.

Some few things by way of application, and so I have done.

I. If it be so, then why should any of God's people vilify, and degrade, and lower the gift of God, wherewithal they are enriched through Jesus Christ? Would you take it as fair dealing from a child that is estated in great lands by his father, if he should say, My father indeed was pleased to bestow a great estate upon my brother, but he hath given little or nothing to me: he hath bestowed great means upon such a sister, but he hath given little or nothing to me? This were not fair dealing. And is this fair dealing with your God and with your Father, when you shall say, Aye, there is such a godly man, the Lord hath given him a great estate of the gospel, but little or nothing to me: and there is such a woman, such a sister, the Lord hath done much for her soul, but, oh! little or nothing for me? Beloved, there is no small sin, because committed against the great God; there is no blessing small, because received from the great God: but of

all blessings, gospel blessing is the greatest. Hath the Lord, therefore, man or woman, given thee any gospel grace, the grace of Jesus Christ? He hath given thee much: that which thou lookest upon as little, it is much in the eye of heaven. Wherefore, now, let not the eunuch say, oh, let not the eunuch say, I am a dry tree, any longer, Take heed how you degrade, and vilify, and lower the grace of God, wherewithal you are enriched through Jesus Christ.

II. If there be such abundance of grace, even grace for grace; abundance of grace given unto the saints and people of God under the New Testament: behold, then, what great sinners professors are! yea, the sins of God's own people! The more light and knowledge a man hath, if he sin, the greater is his sin. The more beams of grace fall upon a man's heart, the more he is able to discern the motes that are there, and so may avoid them: and sinning, he sins the more. The more grace and the more mercy a man sins against, the greater is his sin, because free grace and mercy are the remedy. The more strength a man hath to stand, the greater is his sin if he fall: as it was with Adam, he had strength to stand, and yet he fell. I say, the more strength a man hath to stand, the greater is his sin if he fall. Now, beloved, ye have heard what abundance of grace is discovered, exhibited, communicated unto all the saints under the New Testament; unto all the people of God. Oh! how great are their sins when they fall. The Lord was quick with many that sinned in the Old Testament; and will he not be quick with professors now, that know more, that have more grace, more grace discovered now? Many, when they sin, they excuse themselves, and they say, True, indeed, I have thus and thus sinned; but David did so: I have sinned, I have done thus and thus; but Samson did so: I have committed this or that sin; but Noah did so. Aye, but we have more light, we have more grace discovered ordinarily among us now, than ordinarily among them in the Old Testament: we have more grace discovered, more abundance of grace communicated now. And therefore, as the apostle concludes from it, we ought the more abundantly to take heed: "For if they escaped not without a recompence of reward that sinned against the law of Moses; what shall become of those that sin against the word of Christ, the Son of God?" Professors! all you

that are the people of God, take heed how you sin; take heed how you tamper with your sins: grace hath abounded! you have received much: and therefore if you sin, this is that that will make your sins out of measure sinful: take heed what you do.

III. But, in the third place, if there be such an abundance of grace communicated now, unto all the people of God under the New Testament; what a mighty encouragement is here to all, good and bad: I say, a mighty encouragement to all, to all those that hear me this day, good and bad.

Bad: an encouragement to those that are bad, to those that are wicked: therefore they should come in unto Jesus Christ; he will not send your souls away empty; there is a fulness in Jesus Christ, and those that come unto him shall be filled by him. He does not only give grace, but he gives abundance of grace: who would not come unto Jesus Christ, that he may be filled by Christ? Mark, is there an abundance of grace to be had from Christ, and wilt thou have none, drunkard? Is there such abundance of grace to be had in Christ, and wilt thou have none, wanton? Unclean heart, wilt thou have none? Swearer, sabbath-breaker, wilt thou have none? The Lord persuade your hearts to come in unto Jesus Christ. I tell you, you will have more from him than you expect. The prodigal looked but for bread at his father's house, and he met with a fatted calf, and with a ring, and with the best garment: you shall have more than you looked for; it is a mighty encouragement. Oh, you that never thought of returning unto Jesus Christ, come in now unto Jesus Christ, that you may have abundance of grace from him. I have done, only this: Here is also encouragement unto all that are godly, and therefore they should labour to be rich in grace. Shall Jesus Christ do much for you, and will you do little for him? Shall you receive abundance from him, and will you not do abundance for him? Labour, oh! labour all you servants of God to abound in the work of the Lord, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God in Christ; that you may be filled with all the fruits of righteousness; that you may be strengthened with all might in the inner man: you have received much, you have had abundance; he that hath the least grace, hath abundance: if thou hast but the least

gospel grace, thou hast abundance. Brethren, grace hath abounded! Oh! let us abound in grace, abound in faith, and abound in patience, and abound in meekness, sweetness, and love towards one another, and towards all the saints. You have received much; can you go to heaven with doing little? God expects much from you. I conclude, therefore, with the exhortation of the apostle: "As you have received the Lord Jesus Christ: walk in him; always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," Col. ii. 6.

And thus much for the first thing that is here intended.

SERMON V.

"And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace."
JOHN I. 16.

YE heard, the last day, that three things were contained in this last clause, "Even grace for grace," as it stands in relation to the former part of the verse.

First of all, it notes an abundance of grace: even grace for grace; that is, abundance of grace. The saints and people of God, under the New Testament, do receive abundance of grace from Jesus Christ.

Secondly, it notes also thus much: That all grace is from Jesus Christ. That whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ. Grace for grace, says Austin, that is, grace in order to grace: God gives the former grace, says he, to prepare for the after grace. Whether the former or the latter rain; whether the former or the latter grace, it it all from Christ. Whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Christ.

This suits with the phrase of Job still: "Skin for skin," that is, all a man's skin. So it is explained by the following words: "Skin for skin, even all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. So here, "Of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace:" that is all grace: whatsoever grace we have, we have it from Jesus Christ.

And this also suits with the scope of the place: the scope

of the place is, to exalt Jesus Christ above them that came before him, above Moses. Therefore, says he, at the next verse, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. Though the law were given by Moses, yet, notwithstanding, grace, the chief, that is from Christ.

Now grace, the word grace here in the 17th verse, must be understood of all grace: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth:" that is all grace. And this verse being brought in as a reason of the former, surely, therefore, this must needs be the meaning also of the former. Thus all grace is from Jesus Christ! whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ. This is the argument that I intend, God willing, to speak unto at this time.

Grace sometimes is taken for the favour of God. Sometimes it is taken for God's assistance. Sometimes it is taken for holiness: either in the habit, or in the act. Sometimes it is taken for gifts.

Sometimes the word grace is used for an office in the church. Whatsoever it be, which way soever you take it; all grace is from Christ; whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ.

This, now, will appear, if you consider the insufficiency of nature, and the all-sufficiency of Christ.

As for the insufficiency of nature, you know what the apostle says, "We are not able, as of ourselves, to think a good thought; but all our sufficiency is of God," 1 Cor. iii. 5. And if you look into this ist chapter of John, you find that those that are regenerate, and born again; it is said concerning them, at the 13th verse, "that they are not born of bloods," in the plural number; your English hath it, blood, in the singular number: "You are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Some there are, and were, that thought themselves to be the children of God, because they came of godly parents, because of their bloods, because of their education: so the Jews: "We are the children of Abraham." Some there are, and were, that think themselves the children of God because of some legal workings and monkish devotions: all those legalities under the gospel are called flesh. Some there are that think themselves the children of God, because of some more

refined, and raised, and heroical actions. That he might obviate all these, says he, "We are not born of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." You are for free-will, and you think free-will hath a great stroke in man's conversion: but how can ye look this scripture in the face? No way of will: "Not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." If it be any will, it must be either the will of the flesh or the will of man: but I tell you, says he, "we are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man," no way of will, "but of God."

To the like purpose you have, in James i. 17, "Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above." In some of your books you read thus: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." But it is rather to read, "Every good giving." Every good gift and every good giving is from above. Not only the thing given is from above, but the very donation, the very exhibition, the very giving out of the thing that is good, it is from above. Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above. So that plainly then, there is an utter insufficiency in nature unto what is good.

As for the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ, "He is the first-born among many brethren," Rom. viii. 29. He is the first fruit that sanctifieth all the rest. "I am the First and the Last," says he, Rev. i. 17. The first is the cause of the rest. The sun is the first and the great light, so the cause of all other light. Jesus Christ, he is called the first in this same chapter, 15th verse: "This was he (says John) of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me." So ye read it, but it is, "He was my first," preferred before me, for he was my first. And therefore the first, giving a being unto all that follows, Jesus Christ, he does give a being unto all our grace. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," says he, John xiv. 6.

"I am the way." Would you go to heaven? You cannot go thither, but you must go in some way. A man cannot go unto a city, but he must go some way or other; if he go by water, go by land, this way or that way, still he goes some way or other. Says Christ, If you would go to heaven, I am the way. This same word, way, it notes the means unto a thing; and when he says, "I am the way," it is as if he should say, That look whatever means you do use in order

to heaven, all those means, they have their virtue and their power and their efficacy from me.

Aye, but a man may be in a way, and in a right way, and yet notwithstanding, if he have not some guide he may lose his way.

True, says he, therefore "I am the truth." And it is observable, how truth lies between way and life; as if the way to life were thorough truth, as if truth were the great road or thorough-fare to life. Says Jesus Christ, I am that too, I am the way and the truth too.

Aye, but though a man be in the right way, and he have a guide, he may fall sick and die, and never come to his journey's end.

Therefore says Christ, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" too. I, even I am he that gives life unto all your motions and actions for heaven: all grace from Christ. He it is, even he alone, that hath every man's heart and soul under lock and key.

There are three great doors that must ordinarily be opened, before converting grace can get into the soul of man. The door of a powerful ministry; a large and an effectual door is opened. 1 Cor. xvi. 9. The door of the ear; "He openeth the ear and sealeth instruction," Job xxxiii. 16. The door of the understanding and of the heart; Lydia's heart was opened. Acts xvi. 14. Now if you look into the Scripture you will find, that Jesus Christ hath the opening of all these doors. "He hath the key of David; he openeth and no man shuts, and shutteth and no man openeth," Rev. iii. 7. In the ist of the Revelation and the 18th verse, he says, that he "hath the keys of hell and of death." No man goes into the grave, but he opens a door to let him in; and no man goes to hell, but Jesus Christ he locks him up there, he locks him up there unto all eternity. If he did not lock him in, he would not be there unto all eternity. So that whatsoever grace or holiness there is in any man's heart, he opens the door, he lets it in, it is by his ordering and his sending thither.

And, beloved, if Jesus Christ were not the great Lord-Keeper of his Father's wardrobe, why should those names and titles be given to him, which you find so frequently in Scripture? Cast your eyes where you will, you shall hardly

look upon any thing, but Jesus Christ hath taken the name of that upon himself. If you cast your eyes up to heaven in the day, and behold the sun, he is called "the Sun of Righteousness," Mal. iv. 2. If you cast your eyes in the night upon the stars, or in the morning upon the morning star, he is called "the bright Morning Star," Rev. xxii. 16. If you behold your own body, he is called the head, and the church the body. Col. i. 18. If you look upon your own clothes, he is called your raiment; "Put ye on the Lord Jesus," Rom. xiii. 14. If you behold your meat, he is called bread, "the Bread of Life," John vi. 35. If you look upon your houses, he is called a door. John x. 9. If you look abroad into the fields, and behold the cattle of the fields, he is called the Good Shepherd, John x. 11; he is called the Lamb, John i. 29; he is called the fatted calf, Luke xv. 23. If you look upon the waters, he is called a fountain; the blood of Christ a fountain. Zech. xiii. 1. If you look upon the stones, he is called "a Corner Stone," Isa. xxviii. 16. If you look upon the trees, he is called "a Tree of Life," Prov. iii. 18. What is the reason of this? Surely, not only to way-lay your thoughts, that wheresoever you look, still you should think of Christ; but to show, that in a spiritual way and sense, he is all this unto the soul. And you may observe, that these titles and names, they are not barely and nakedly given to him; but still with some speciality, some mark or other. He is not barely called the Shepherd, but the Good Shepherd. He is not only called a Lamb, but the "Lamb slain from the beginning of the world." He is not barely called the light, but "the true Light," the light of the world. He is not barely called bread, but "the Bread of Life." Now you know why Adam at the first gave names unto the creatures; according to their names was their natures, was their conditions, and Adam, our first father Adam, was not mistaken when he gave the names. And do you think Christ, the second Adam, when he gives these names unto himself, that he is mistaken? Certainly he is not mistaken, he is all this. And therefore, as the apostle speaks, Col. iii. 11, you read it, "Christ is all in all." But better, he is all things in all persons, or all things in all things; he is all things. Whatsoever good there is found in any man, it is from Jesus Christ. Surely may one say,

The Lord is our strength; surely may we all say, The Lord is our strength, the Lord Jesus is our righteousness. Whatsoever grace or holiness the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ.

You will say, This, though it seem to give much to Christ, it derogates from the Father; for if all be from Jesus Christ, then nothing from the Father, and so it derogates from God the Father.

I answer, No, it does no way derogate from God the Father. The apostle Paul was much in this doctrine that now I am upon, and yet he honoured the Father too. "Grace and peace (says he) from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. i.7. Though all grace be from Christ, yet grace and peace from the Father too, says he, from God our Father. And having shown in the viith of the Romans, that being married unto Christ, and dead unto the law, that therefore we should bring forth fruit. As in the 4th verse: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." He does not say, that we should bring forth fruit unto Christ, but that we should bring forth fruit unto God. The Father and Christ are one: "I and my Father are one," says Christ, John x. 30. In honouring Jesus Christ, you honour the Father, as in honouring of the Father you honour Christ.

You will say, Wherein is the honour to the Father according unto this truth? How does this any way make to the honour of God the Father, that all grace is from Jesus Christ?

Yes! for I answer, First, though all grace be immediately given out of the hand of Christ, all grace from him, and he gives it out; he is commissioned, and designed by the Father to do it: he does but the Father's work. "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me," John vi. 38. Was it any dishonour to Pharaoh, that Joseph gave out the bread in the time of famine? No, because he was commissioned by Pharaoh to do it. And so now, if Jesus Christ have a commission from the Father to do this, it is no dishonour to the Father: and a commission he hath,

he will shew you it under hand and seal; "Him hath God the Father sealed," John vi. 27. So says Christ.

Again, though all grace come immediately out of the hand of Christ, all grace from him, and he gives it out: yet he is furnished and accomplished with ability unto this great office by God the Father. Isa. lxi. 1. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (says he) and he hath anointed me to open the prison doors to captives," &c. Now, is it any dishonour to God, that the sun does distribute and give out light, and heat unto all the creatures? No, but rather an honour to him: for when a man sees so glorious a creature as the sun, that gives out light, and heat unto all the creatures here below; he lifts up his hands, and says; Oh! what a glorious God have we, that hath furnished this creature with these abilities? So now, when a man considers Christ as this great Sun of Righteousness, distributing his graces to all the saints; will it be any dishonour to God the Father that he is in this office, seeing he hath furnished him hereunto? Surely no, they will rather lift up their hands and say, Oh! what a good God have we, that hath furnished Christ with all these abilities for our poor souls?

Again, Though the administration of things be in the hand of Christ, the right is in the Father: and when Jesus Christ hath done his work, he will give up the kingdom to the Father: in the mean while, "None comes unto the Son but whom the Father draws," John vi. 14, and "None comes unto the Father, but he unto whom the Son reveals him," Matt. xi. 27. Is it any disparagement unto a man, to have a wise, a potent, a great man to his child? "A wise son makes a glad father," says Solomon, Prov. x. 1. Indeed if the Father and the Son were two, they might be enemies: but Christ and the Father are one: "I and my Father are one," John x. 30: and therefore in honouring of Jesus Christ, you honour the Father also.

But you will say, Was there no creature in all the world, that was fit to make this great trust over to? Why hath God the Father put Christ into this office, that all grace should come out of his hand? Was there no creature that was fit for this work but Christ alone?

No, I answer, this trust would have broke the back of any creature: no creature in heaven or earth, as a mere creature,

was able to purchase this trust; he had not a stock and estate of grace enough by him: Christ himself hath it by purchase: for he being the second person, the apostle tells us, "He emptied himself, and became of no reputation; wherefore God hath given him a name above every name," Phil. ii. 7, 9, that in the name and strength of Jesus Christ we should be more than conquerors. He had a great estate by him, he was the second person: yet notwithstanding, this purchase was so great, that says Paul, "He emptied himself." Surely no creature in heaven or earth was able to come to this purchase. He that must be the world's Joseph, to give out bread of grace to all the world, the saints in the world; he must have infinite knowledge to know the wants of God's people: and he must have infinite mercy, and patience, and goodness to pity them: and he must have infinite power, to reach it forth unto them, which no creature hath, and therefore no creature at all fit for this work.

Besides, God the Father hath so ordered things in the dispensations of his grace, that he might take the most contentment, and complacency, and delight in the duties and services of his people: this is the only way to it. "This is my beloved Son (says he) in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. If there be a garment that is laid with gold-lace, hung or stuck full of pearls; though the cloth of the garment be not much worth; yet because of the gold lace, and the pearls that are upon it, you count it very precious. Such are our duties; the cloth of our duty is not much worth, but because of the golden lace, and the pearls of the graces of Jesus Christ, they are very precious. It is not in regard of our duties, as in regard of our flowers, or posies: let a flower or posie be never so sweet, they receive not any of the sweetness from the bosom that it sticks in: the posie does sweeten the bosom, but the bosom does not sweeten the posie. Aye but now the duty that is stuck in the bosom of Jesus Christ, is sweetened by the bosom, by the bosom that it sticks in. Pray mark, therefore, what is said in the xith of the Canticles for this purpose. Says the spouse at the 12th verse, "When (or while) the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." My spikenard; what is that? The graces, and the duties, and the services of God's people, they are his spikenard: this spikenard sendeth forth the

smell thereof, while the king sitteth at his table; while it is in the presence of Jesus Christ; whilst the posie is in his bosom it smells sweet, else it does not. Now God the Father, I say, he hath so ordered things, that he may take a complacency and contentment in the duties and services of his people, and therefore it is that all their graces, they come from Jesus Christ, by virtue of him.

It will be objected yet. It should seem that all grace does not come from Christ; no, nor from God the Father neither: for in the xvith of the Proverbs, and the 1st verse, it is said, as some translations read it, "The preparations of the heart are of man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." If a man can prepare his heart, that is a great matter: but now, says Solomon, "The preparations of the heart are of man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord:" surely therefore, all is not of grace, and all is not of Christ.

By way of answer, I shall say these three things.

1. The meaning of this place cannot be according to this objection: for then, as Bradwardine does well observe, the greater should be given to man, and the lesser should be given to God: for it is a greater thing for a man to prepare his heart, than for him to speak words when his heart is prepared. And then again, as Austin observes, this would be contrary to other Scriptures: for our Saviour Christ, he says, "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5: yes, might a man say, according to Solomon's doctrine, I can prepare my own heart, and that is a great duty. And so whereas the apostle says, "We are not able for to think a good thought," 2 Cor. iii. 5: a man might say, yes, but according to Solomon's doctrine, I am able to prepare my own heart. The meaning therefore of this place cannot be according to this objection.

2. The scope therefore, of this place is this: to shew the vanity and the bootlessness of all our thoughts without God. Let a man think, and think, and spend his heart in thoughtfulness, all is in vain unless God go along with him; for God can come between his heart and his lips. So it was with Balaam; he prepared his heart for to curse the people; but God came between his heart and the preparation, and

he gave an answer of blessing contrary to the preparation of his heart. That is the scope of the place, to show the vanity of the preparations of our hearts to any business, unless we take God along with us.

3. This place is so far from speaking against the doctrine in hand, that it seems to speak for it. For according to the Hebrew, the words may be read thus: "The heart preparations of man, and the answer of the tongue from the Lord:" giving both heart and tongue into the hand of the Lord. And if it be so, that after a man hath prepared his heart unto any work, God is able to come between the heart and the lip, and to give in another answer into the mouth than what was intended in the heart: this shows that all is of God, that all is of grace; and so this place does rather confirm the doctrine that I am now upon.

Aye, but yet it will be said then: Grant it, that all grace is from Christ, that whatsoever grace a man hath, he hath it from Jesus Christ; yet so, as that when a man is converted, and drawn to Christ; there is a principle, or a habit of grace infused into the soul, whereby through ordinary concurrence and assistance from God, a man is able for to walk graciously without fresh assistance: for example, when the Lord made the world in the beginning, he gave unto the creatures a power to bring forth their like; he gave unto the beasts a power to bring forth their like; he gave unto plants, unto herbs, a power to bring forth their like; he gave unto man a power to bring forth his like; and so, grace being but a creature, he gave also unto grace a power to bring forth gracious actions without fresh assistance, only by ordinary concurrence: yet, because that this first habit is infused and comes from God, this is said to be from Christ, and from grace; so that though all is of grace, and all is from Christ, yet all is not from Christ in regard of fresh assistance.

Give me leave to answer this. Yes, all is from Jesus Christ; all grace is from Jesus Christ in regard of fresh assistance too.

For although in the beginning God made a covenant of works with man, and then gave that grace, that he had a power to bring forth its like; yet now the Lord hath brought us under a better covenant, a better covenant than the former was. In the first covenant that God made with us, and with

Adam, the Lord gave man a great stock of grace, but gave him no promise of perseverance; but now he hath. In the first, indeed, God gave man a great stock of grace, but Satan being stronger than man, came upon him, and beguiled him of it. Now though the Lord does give a Christian less grace in his hand for the present, yet he hath laid it up in so safe a hand, that though Satan, a stronger than he, does come down upon him, he is not able to wrest it from him, or beguile him of it, because it is in the hand of Christ, that is a stronger than he: and Jesus Christ, by a compact with the Father, from all eternity, hath engaged himself to do it; to give forth grace and assistance to all the elect, according to all their needs. So that, I say, now, all grace is from Jesus Christ in regard of fresh assistance. Therefore the Psalmist prays thus: "Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise," Psalm li. 15. Lord, though thou hast given me habitual grace, yet, if I have not fresh assistance from thee, for to open my lips, my mouth will not shew forth thy praise. And so again, "Lord, open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy law," Psalm cxix. 18. And to this purpose, it is in the xviith Psalm, and the 5th verse, says David, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Mark, I pray, David ye know was a godly man, he had a habit of grace. Now, Lord, says David, as for the business that is between Saul and me, thou knowest I am in thy way; yet, Lord, says he, though I be in thy way, and have a habit of grace, yet if thou dost not hold up my steps, if thou dost not give me fresh assistance, I shall fall, I shall slip: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Does not the apostle say, "The will and the deed is from God?" Phil. ii. 13. You may observe, that the graces of God's people, they are called in the New Testament, "the fruits of the Spirit," Gal. v. 22. They are not called the fruits of a former habit, but they are called "the fruits of the Spirit." And, indeed, if all grace were not from Jesus Christ, in regard of fresh assistance, truly, then, might a man have wherein to boast: as Bradwardine reasons the case: For, says he, though a child have his being from his father, his education from his father, learning, military skill; yet, notwithstanding, the valour of an action being his own, he hath in opposition to his father wherein to boast. True, I confess

indeed I had my being from my father, I had my nature from my father, I had my education from my father, I had this skill from my father; but the prowess, and the valour, and the spirit of the action is all mine own: and he hath wherein to boast. So if he hath the habit only from Christ, he hath wherein to boast: true, I had the habit, the grace from God, aye but the spirit of the action, that is mine: he hath wherein to boast. But there is no room for boasting, and therefore all grace is from Christ in regard of fresh assistance.

It will be yet said, but if all grace be from Christ in regard of fresh assistance too, why is it said that we repent, and we believe, and we obey: for if all grace, in regard of the very work, be from Christ; if Jesus Christ do work all our works; why is it not rather said, that Christ does repent, and Christ does believe, and Christ does obey?

I answer, No. You know the persons that are responsible: if I owe a man a thousand pounds, and have never a penny to pay it; and another man he comes and lends me the money, and goes along with me to the creditor, the bond is taken up, and acquittance made, discharge made; he is not said to have paid the money, but I am said to pay the money that am responsible. So, now, you are responsible: and therefore, though ye have all strength from Christ to do it, yet you are said to repent, and believe, and obey. The devil is not said to commit adultery, and commit murder, yet by his instigation it is done. The sun does work with the tree, when the tree does bring forth fruit; and yet it is not said that the sun brings forth an apple, or brings forth fruit: because the sun does work as an universal cause, and the tree as a particular cause. So now, though Jesus Christ does work in all our workings, yet he is not said to repent, or believe, or to obey: because he works as an universal cause, and you work as a particular cause. Only behold here the mirror of grace: all is of Christ, and yet all is our's; all is our's in denomination, and all is Christ's in operation; all is our's in regard of encouragement, and all is Christ's in regard of glory; all is our's in regard of reward, and all is Christ's in regard of honour. Here is grace! Here is the mystery of grace! but still all, whatsoever grace a man hath, he hath it from Jesus Christ.

Aye but, will you say, to what end is this doctrine opened,

thus largely opened and pressed? What good is there that does come thereby?

What good! I answer, What good would you have? What good would you do? Would you have the Lord Jesus Christ to become your strength? The way to have him to become your strength, is to count him so. Look I pray upon the xxxist Psalm, the 2nd and 3rd verses: "Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress." Be thou my rock, for thou art my rock. What kind of argument is this? Yet it is a good argument: the way to have Christ our rock, is to account him our rock; my very resting upon the promise does make it mine; and your very resting upon Jesus Christ does make him yours; and what will make you rest more upon him, than to see that all is from him?

Again. Would you have your hearts warmed with love unto Jesus Christ? Indeed our whole life should be nothing else but an expression of love to Christ, as Christ's life and death was nothing else but an expression of love to us. Now, says a gracious soul, is this true indeed, that all grace is from Christ? that whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ? that there is not a good thought in my heart, but runs through the heart of Jesus Christ before it does come at mine? What infinite cause then have I to love Jesus Christ.

Again. Would you live in dependance upon Christ for grace, for truth? The serious consideration of this truth will help you to it. I confess indeed, will some say, when I look upon myself, I am a man or woman of such poor gifts or parts, that I have no hope, I am afraid I shall never attain to the truth of the time; but is it so, that all is from Jesus Christ? whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ? Why may not I know the truth of the time as well as another? I will yet wait on Jesus Christ.

Again. Would you walk humbly, be very humble, and get a serious and deep humiliation for sin committed? The study of this truth will help you to do it. You know what the prophet Isaiah says, "Oh, Lord, (says he) woe is me, I am undone, I am undone," Isa. vi. 5. Why? what is the matter? Oh, says he, "mine eyes have seen the King." If you look into the iiird chapter of Matthew, you will find

there, in John the Baptist, such a self-humbling speech, Christ-advancing speech, as you shall not meet with many of the like again. Says he, at the 11th verse, "Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear;" or as other Gospels hath it, "Whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose." Beloved, I pray consider it a little. John, than which there was not a greater, the great preacher that all the country followed, John cries out and says, "Whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose." What made him think thus? What wrought his heart into this humble, this self-denying frame? The very doctrine we are now upon? Says he, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." As if he should say thus: I may baptize you outwardly, but the efficacy of all those ordinances, it is from Jesus Christ, and therefore, because the efficacy of every ordinance is from Jesus Christ, says he, As for me, I am not worthy to bear his shoes, to undo his latchet.

Yet further, in the general, Would you be fruitful? would you be fruitful in your life and conversation? People, they complain of barrenness. Would you be fruitful? Observe what course the gardener takes with the apricot. This is a fruit, says he, that will not grow every where; but surely, if it will grow any where, it will grow upon the back of this chimney, the warm heat, the heat of this chimney will nurse it up. Or else, It will grow up against that wall, I will set it in the face of the sun, that it may have the smiles of the sunbeams, and then it will grow. He sets it there, and then it grows, and brings forth a pleasant fruit. Dost thou complain thou art not fruitful; what is the reason? may be thou growest in the shade, may be thou growest in the shade; but come and bring forth thine heart, set it in the sun, under the warm beams of the love of Jesus Christ: see if thy heart be not fruitful then. And, beloved, what greater love than this, that Jesus Christ hath died for sinners? that he hath died for sinners? that he hath purchased all grace for sinners? And he keeps their stock in his own hand, to give it out unto them according to all their wants. Here is love; here is grace. This is the way to be fruitful.

I come to the application.

Is it so, that all grace is from Christ, that whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ—Christ meriting, and Christ working; that all our efficiency and sufficiency, and all-sufficiency is from Christ. That he is the great Joseph, the world's Joseph, the Lord-Keeper of all our graces, the Lord-Treasurer of all our comforts. Then, oh, what infinite cause have we all to advance and lift up the name of Jesus Christ, to hallow Jesus Christ, not verbally but really. Commanded ye are to honor your parents: they give you a being, and yet by that being you are brought forth under the wrath of God; but yet honor them, because you have your being from them. Aye, and by your birth and by your nature exposed unto the wrath of God for ever; yet honor them, because you have your being from them.

And shall we honor our parents because we have our outward being from them? and shall we not honor Jesus Christ, from whom we have the being of all our graces, the being of our souls unto all eternity? What infinite engagements are upon us all to honor Jesus Christ.

You will say unto me, This indeed does naturally follow; but how shall we honor Jesus Christ according to the heighth of this doctrine? how shall we honor Jesus Christ according to the heighth of this truth, that is now before us? Give me leave to spend some time in this; this is that I have been driving at all this while. Some particulars herein.

Ye cannot honour Jesus Christ, unless that you do offer up your own Christ unto him: I say, unless you offer up your own Christ to him; I mean, your natural Christ to him. Some there are, that make a Christ of their good meaning, and think to be saved thereby; rest upon that, and think to be saved thereby. Some rest upon an honest and sober conversation, and think to be saved thereby. Some rest upon their duties, enlargements in duties, and think to be saved thereby. Some rest upon their very resting; trusting is not to be trusted to: but some rest upon their very resting, and think to be saved thereby. Some rest upon those enjoyments and sweetnesses that they meet withal in duty, and think to be saved thereby. Beloved, you may observe, that when the Lord commanded his people in the Old Testament to honour him, he commands them to sacrifice such things to him, which other nations did make their gods;

they should sacrifice sheep, and oxen, and birds; such things they should offer up unto God, that others did worship as god: plainly teaching this, that he that will honour God, must give that unto God which the world makes its god. So say I, if you would honour Christ, you must give that up unto Jesus Christ, which other men do make their Christ. Many false Christs there are that are made by men: you cannot honour Jesus Christ, if you do not give up those to him.

Again. You cannot honour Jesus Christ, if you count it a small matter to belong to him. A servant that honours his master, does count it a great matter to belong to him. And therefore David, he does title some of his Psalms so: a Psalm of David the servant of the Lord: he does not say, a Psalm of David the king of Israel; but, a Psalm of David the servant of the Lord: counting it more honour to be the Lord's servant, than to be king of Israel; he counted it a great matter to be the Lord's servant, because he honoured the Lord. Those that honour Christ, they look upon the things of Christ as great matters: the works of Christ, as great works: and the ordinances of Christ as great matters; and a great matter to belong to Christ: and if they lose any thing, or lose any friend; they will relieve themselves here; Oh! but yet I belong to Jesus Christ, yet I belong to Jesus Christ.

Ye cannot honour Jesus Christ, and give the worst to him. Abel honoured God, and he offered the best; and because he offered the best, therefore he honoured God. "If I be a Father, where is mine honour? (says the Lord.) Why bring ye the lean, and the maimed, and the feeble?" Mal. i. 6, 8. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase," says Solomon, Prov. iii. 9. Observe therefore, what is your best, and what is your substance, and what are your first fruits? and give them up to Christ. Young men, young men, and women; the best of your years, the best of your strength, the best of your time is to be given to Jesus Christ: ye cannot honour Jesus Christ, and give him the worst: oh! that the old people would be much humbled; and the young people would be much encouraged: you cannot honour Jesus Christ, and give the worst to him.

Ye cannot honour Jesus Christ, and despise the choice work of Christ. What is the choice work of Christ? Grace, grace is the choice work of Christ, that comes out of his hand; and the worst name that you can give it, is, to call it hypocrisy. Some there are, that looking upon the lives of godly men, they say: Aye, but it is all hypocrisy, and they are hypocritical. Yea, and some poor souls there are, that when they look upon their own souls, they conclude and say; Aye, but it is all hypocrisy; I prayed such a time, but it was all in hypocrisy: aye, but what if it be the grace of Christ? what if it prove so? Surely, surely ye cannot honour Jesus Christ, and despise the choicest works that come out of his hands.

Again, a man is said then for to honour Christ, when he does trust unto him, and rest upon him for help at a dead lift, as we speak commonly, and the more a man does rely upon Jesus Christ in straits and in the time of temptation, the more he does honour Jesus Christ. Abraham gave glory to God, he believed above hope, and under hope; and because he believed above hope, and under hope, therefore he gave glory to God, when he considered his own body. Man or woman, wouldest thou therefore now honour Jesus Christ? Say, True, I confess indeed I have sinned much; and when I look upon myself, I know no reason why such a wretch, so great a sinner as I, should be saved: but because the way to honour Christ is for to rest upon him; and I have dishonoured Jesus Christ enough already, therefore now, through the grace of God, I will cast the weight of my poor guilty soul upon Jesus Christ; yea, for that very reason will I leave the weight of my guilty soul upon him, because thereby I may honour him.

Again, the way to honour Jesus Christ, is, so to walk and so to live, as the men of the world may speak well of the ways of Christ by your conversation. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify God," &c. Matt. v. 16. The men of the world will then speak well of the ways of Christ, when a christian, that hath the name of Christ in a special manner put upon him, when he does that through the strength of Christ, which the men of the world cannot do: pray for those that persecute you; do good to those that do ill to you: when a man is abundant in the work

of the Lord, constant therein, and humble. For abundant, you know what our Saviour says: "In this is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit," John xv. 8. One sun in the firmament, honours God the Creator more, than an hundred little stars. One strong christian, that does much for God, honours him more than twenty, than an hundred weak ones.

Aye, but though a man have advance of grace, and be abundant in the work of the Lord: yet notwithstanding, if he be not constant therein, he does not cause the way of Christ to be well spoken of: what will men say? Aye, he is wound up to a great height for the present, but stay a little, and you will find him down by and by.

Yea, though a man be abundant and constant: yet if he be not humble, he does not honour the way of Christ: when a man is abundant in good, constant therein, and walks humbly; what says the world then? Aye, there is the man, if all professors were such; aye, there is an humble man, there is a self-denying man; aye, if you were all such, if you were all such, then I should like the ways of God the better. Take heed therefore, unto your lives, that ye so walk, as that the ways of Jesus Christ may be well spoken of by you.

Would you honour Jesus Christ as you should? Then own him: own him in evil times, and stand for him in the times of general declining. *Honor est testimonium de allicujus excellentia;* honour is the testimony of a man's excellency: when I testify of an excellency in a man, then I honour him; and the more I testify of an excellency in a man, the more I honour him. Now the less the truth of Christ is; and the more despised the ordinance of Christ is, and the more I suffer for it: the more do I testify of an excellency in Jesus Christ: what! suffer the loss of all for that which the world counts little worth! O! if there be such an excellency in a truth, a small truth, a despised ordinance; what an excellency is there in Christ himself! Observe therefore, what those despised ordinances are, and labour to bear them up, those truths that the world counts small truths, be willing to lose much for them; stand for them in times of general declining; own Jesus Christ in evil times; otherwise you cannot honour him.

I have done. Only thus: be willing to stoop unto any

work, though it lies much below your condition, for Jesus Christ; and say, that you are not sufficient unto such a work: when you have done the work, set the crown upon the head of the means, that is most properly Christ's. Some means are natural, and some institutional: some means that are near unto Christ: some means that ye use in a work, that are more properly Christ's: choose to set the crown upon the head of the means that is nearest to Jesus Christ. Thus doing, ye shall honour Jesus Christ. And oh! my beloved, why should not we all now set ourselves for to honour him? not in word, but in deed to honour Jesus Christ? He hath done all for our profit, why should we not do all for his honour? God the Father honours Jesus Christ, why should not we honour Jesus Christ? you that have had the experience of this truth, as I make no question but there are many here, that have had the experience of it; that whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ: you, I say, that have had the experience of this truth. Oh! labour now to advance, to lift up the name of Jesus Christ: oh! that our whole life, might be nothing else, but a Christ-advancing life! you that have the experience of it, labour, not in word, but in deed to lift up the name of Jesus Christ.

SERMON VI.

"*And of his fulness have all we received, even grace for grace.*"
JOHN I. 16.

THREE things, ye heard, are to be noted in this last clause, as it stands in relation to the former part of the verse:

First. It notes, an abundance of grace.

Secondly. It notes thus much: that whatsoever grace the saints have, they have it from Jesus Christ. And of these two I have spoken already.

The third now follows. It notes also, an answerableness of grace in every christian unto the grace of Christ. Of whose fulness we have all received, even grace for grace; grace ans-

werable to his grace. We have not only received abundance of grace from Christ: but whatsoever grace or holiness there is in Jesus Christ, there is somewhat in the saints that is answerable thereunto.

And this now suits with your ordinary expression: when the seal falls upon the wax, and the wax receives it rightly; ye say, there is upon the wax, stamp for stamp, character for character, image for image: so here, grace for grace, that is, whatsoever grace there is in Christ, there is the like stamp upon the heart of every christian.

This also suits with that expression of Scripture, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," Matt. v. 38; that is, an eye answerable unto an eye, a tooth answerable to a tooth; so grace for grace, that is answerable grace: whatsoever grace or holiness there is in Christ, something in a christian that answers thereunto.

Take grace for favour, for the favour of God. And is Jesus Christ called the Beloved of God; "This is my beloved Son," Matt. iii. 17? so are the saints too; Solomon is called "Jedidiah, the beloved of God," 2 Sam. xii. 25.

Take grace for privilege. Is Jesus Christ called the Son of God? "This is my beloved Son;" so are the saints too: "Every son whom he loves," &c., Heb. xii. 6. Is he called an Heir, "the Heir of all things," Heb. i. 2? the saints are said to be "heirs and co-heirs with Jesus Christ," Rom. viii. 17. Is he called "Elect and precious," 1 Peter ii. 6? so are they too "elect and precious," 1 Peter i. 2. Is he called "God's Fellow," as ye have it in Zechariah xiii. 7? the saints they are called his fellows: "Who is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows," Heb. i. 9, that is, above the saints. Is he called the Light, "the Light of the world," John viii. 12, the true Light? they are called light too: "Ye were darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord," Eph. v. 8.

Take grace for assistance. And had Jesus Christ felt an assistance from God the Father, as ye read at large in the xxiind Psalm? so have the saints too: "My grace is sufficient for thee," 1 Cor. xii. 9.

Take grace for holiness or sanctification. And is he said to be sanctified; "For this cause have I sanctified myself," John xvii. 19? so are the saints also said to be sanctified:

"That they also may be sanctified," John xvii. 19. Is he said to be full of grace; "full of grace and truth," John i. 14? so are the saints too, some of them: Stephen, full of grace, Acts vii. 55; and Mary, full of grace. Oh, what a glorious mercy is here before us now! whatsoever grace and holiness there is in Christ; somewhat in the saints that is answerable thereunto. Let us awaken, and stir up ourselves for to look into it.

Ye read of a fellowship that the saints have with Christ in that first Epistle to John, the ist chapter and the 3rd verse: "That which we have heard and seen, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." *Communio*, 1 Cor. i. 2; *societas*, Gal. ii. 9. He does exhort them to fellowship with them, with the saints, upon this ground and motive; because their fellowship was with the Father and with the Son. He does assert this fellowship with the Father and with the Son, with the most ingenuous asseveration: "And truly our fellowship," may be you will think this no great matter; "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." And so in that known place in 1 Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" as you read it; it is the same word, fellowship. And in 1 Cor. i. 9, it is said, "God is faithful, by whom ye are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:" the same word there too, as the word that is used in the Acts of the Apostles, ii. 44, where it is said, "that the disciples had all things common." Look, therefore, as it is in a society, where they have all things common; such is the fellowship that is between Christ and the saints. They have not any sin, but it is imputed to Jesus Christ, though it be great or small; and he hath not any grace, but it is communicated to all the saints; hath not any grace, but they have some grace or other that is answerable thereunto. This is a great matter.

Would you know the reason now? grace for grace; grace answerable to his grace.

I. First of all, there is a glorious and blessed union between Christ and every christian; a union beyond all expression. It is compared, indeed, unto the union that is between the head and the members, the root and the branches, the hus-

band and the wife; but though they come up to what Christ intended, yet they all fall short of this union that is between Christ and a christian: for the head is not in the members, nor the members in the head, mutually; but Christ in them, and they in Christ: "I in you, and you in me," saith he John xiv. 20. It is a union of mutual in-being, not a union of affection only, such as the stones have, when they lie together in a heap; but rather such as is between the wine and the water, when they are put together, saving that they are not mixed together. Christ is not mixed with a christian, a christian is not mixed with Christ; Christ is not a christian, a christian is not Christ; but there is a union of mutual in-being. Now, you know, when the fire gets into the iron, is united to it, is in it, the properties of the fire are communicated to the iron; the iron forgets his own blackness, and shines with the shining of the fire, and burns with the burning of the fire. And as a coal, a charcoal, though it be never so dark and black a body, when the fire comes, gets into it, the properties of the fire are communicated to it, and it burns like the fire itself, and melts like the fire itself, and shines like the fire itself. So, when the Lord Jesus Christ is united to a soul, look what excellencies there are in Christ, what graces in Christ, the same are communicated to it; the soul shines with Christ's shining, and warms with his warming: there is grace answerable for his grace. You know there was a blessed union between the Second Person and our nature, our flesh; the Second Person takes our nature upon him, and being united to our flesh, by virtue of the hypostatical union, the idioms and properties of the one are given to the other: God hath no flesh, God hath no blood; and yet we read, in the Acts of the Apostles, of the blood of God, because of the union: the properties of the flesh and of man's nature are given to God. So says the apostle: "He that descended is the same also that ascended," Eph. iv. 10. God does not descend, for he is everywhere; but by reason of the union, what is proper to the flesh is given to God. And so now, in this mystical union, there being such a glorious and blessed union between Christ and a christian; whatsoever grace, or excellency, or property is in Christ himself, there is an answerableness of grace, an excellency wrought in

the heart of every christian; he hath grace for grace, he hath stamp for stamp.

II. And again, The Lord Jesus Christ is our second Adam, a common person between God and us. Now look as it was concerning our forefather Adam, being a common person; look what nature he had, we have: he was made up of soul and body, and so are we: his body had legs and arms and other members, and we have member for member; we have head for head, and arms for arms, and legs for legs; and so, he sinning, we have sin for his sin, pride for his pride, and unbelief for his unbelief, because he was a common person. So I say, Jesus Christ, being our second Adam, look what grace he had, the saints have; they have grace for his grace, they have holiness for his holiness. The apostle says, in the vth of the Romans, "That as by one man's offence death came, so through the gift of grace, grace hath abounded: but not as the offence (says he at the 15th verse) so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one man, many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many," Now, if we should not have grace for grace from Christ, as we had sin for sin from the first Adam; how should grace superabound? Our Lord and Saviour Christ says himself, I have life in myself; "the Son hath life in himself," John v. 26; which laid to that expression which you have in the ist of Genesis, speaks to our purpose, the 11th and 12th verses: "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself;" and so again at the 12th verse, "Whose seed was in itself." That is, these creatures had a power in themselves to bring forth their like. And so says Jesus Christ, as other creatures had seed in themselves to bring forth their like; so have I life in myself, and am able to bring forth my like; and so he does, for he is our second Adam, and therefore, as we had sin for sin from the first Adam, we must have grace for grace from the second Adam also.

III. There is an incomparable, and glorious, blessed love between Christ and a Christian. Love, loves to make a thing loved to be like itself. Love in an inferior is of an imitating nature, and love in a superior is of an assimilating

nature. Now therefore if there be love between Christ and a Christian, they must needs be very like, and love there is; Christ loves the saints above all the world, and the saints love Christ above all the world. Only Christ's love exceeds; for when the spouse speaks of Christ in the Canticles, she calls him "My Beloved," in the concrete; but when he speaks of her, he calls her "My Love, my Dove," in the abstract. Jesus Christ had loving thoughts towards the saints before the world was; as ye read in the viiith of the Proverbs and the 29th verse. Says Wisdom, and so Christ, there, "When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him: I was daily his delight (verse the 31st), rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Jesus Christ was then in the bosom of his Father; he had enough to take up his heart with full delight: and yet notwithstanding, before the saints were, his love was towards them, and his delight was in them. Surely, if he loved them so much before they had a being, when they have a being, he will exercise and put forth that old and ancient love of his in more abundance towards them. When a man loves a maid or a virgin, while she is in her father's house, she is set apart for him; but now afterward, when she leaves her father's house and all her kindred, that she may only cleave unto him, then his heart is drawn out more. How am I engaged, says he, to love this woman, that hath left all the world to come unto me. So there was love in Christ towards the saints, while they were but set apart for him in God's decree; but now when they shall leave their father's house for him, will he not then delight in them? See what is said in the xlvth Psalm: "Hearken, O daughter, (at the 10th verse) and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house: so shall the King greatly desire (or delight in) thy beauty." But delight in them and love them he cannot, unless they be like unto him; for the lover loves to make a thing loved to be like himself, or himself to be like to it. The lover would, if he could, melt himself into a oneness with the thing loved. Indeed our love is scant, and we cannot do it. Moses, of whom the law is signified, might chip and pare his

wife's nails, but he could not change her countenance. A man may love his wife, and bestow much upon her; but he is not able to change her countenance, to make her to be like himself. But Jesus Christ hath this happiness above all the world; his love hath this happiness above all other love, that he is able to melt the person loved, the soul loved into his own likeness: and therefore, wherever Jesus Christ sets his heart upon any soul, to delight in any, he draws his image upon them, makes the soul to be like unto him; what grace he hath himself, he does communicate it unto that soul, that there is an answerableness of grace, even grace for grace.

IV. Again, There is the same Spirit in a Christian, that is in Christ. "I will send (says he) the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and he shall come unto you," John xv. 26. The Spirit does not only come to them, but is said to dwell in them, and to be shed abroad upon their hearts. Now if a beast had the spirit and the soul of a man, he would work like a man, he would speak like a man; and if a plant, if a tree, if an herb had the life of a beast, it would taste like a beast; and if a stone, if that had the life of a plant, it would grow like a plant: so now, if a Christian have the Spirit of Christ, he must work like Christ, he must needs be like Christ. Now the same Spirit he hath; a Christian hath the same Spirit with Christ, and therefore needs must be like unto him, and have grace for his grace. Somewhat in a Christian answerable to every grace of Christ.

You will say unto me, How can this be? Indeed it holds forth abundance of comfort unto the saints, and an encouragement to all to be so; but how can this be? There are some incommunicable properties, personal excellencies of Christ: Are all men Saviours? are all men Mediators? are all men Christs?

I answer, No; we must therefore so understand it, in things that man is capable of. We have member for member with Adam, every man, head for his head, and legs for his legs; but every man is not the first Adam, that, every man is not capable of. So Jesus Christ, he is made like to us, but he is not a sinner, that, he was not capable of. And so we have grace for grace, answerable grace, it is to be understood in things that we are capable of; we are not Saviours, we are not Mediators, we are not Christs. In some

of those things that we are not capable of, yet there is somewhat in a Christian that in some other kind is answerable thereunto. As now for example, when our Lord and Saviour Christ was baptized, the heavens opened, and the Holy Ghost fell down upon him in the shape of a dove: the Holy Ghost does not so fall down upon men now, but yet it is shed abroad in the hearts of all that are godly. He is the great King, and the Priest, and the Prophet of his church: all the saints are kings and priests and prophets, but not to that height as he was. To open this a little, that I may clear the point:

Is our Lord and Saviour Christ a Prophet, and as a Prophet does he teach his people, the saints? In that of the Revelation, xi. 3, the two witnesses are said to prophesy in sackcloth. They are said to prophesy too.

Is our Lord and Saviour Christ a King, and as a King does he overcome and subdue Satan, and our lusts, and the world? So do the saints too. "This is your victory whereby ye overcome the world, even your faith," 1 John v. 4. As a King, does he overcome, and sit down in his throne? So do they too. In the iiird of the Revelation and the 21st verse, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Mark I pray, Christ hath a throne on earth: says he "As I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne in heaven;" so those that overcome shall sit down, that is, have communion. "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac," Matt. viii. 11; that is, have communion with them. So here, "To him that overcomes, will I grant to sit down with me in my throne." They shall have communion with Jesus Christ in his throne. As a King does the Lord Jesus Christ "rule the nations, and break them in pieces with a rod of iron?" Psalm ii. 9. So shall the saints do in their generation and in their way: look I pray into the iind of the Revelation, the 26th verse, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." Mark, "And he thall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father." He

does not say, Even as I received this doctrine of my Father, but, As I (which you read of in the iind Psalm) received this power from my Father: they shall communicate with me in this power: even as I received of my Father, so shall they receive it; they shall have communion with him in this.

Is Jesus Christ a Priest? and as a Priest, does he sacrifice? So do the saints too. The apostle exhorts the Romans, "that they offer up themselves a reasonable sacrifice." Rom. xii. 1. As a Priest, does he make intercession? So it is said concerning the saints in the viiith of the Romans: "The Spirit of God that is upon them, makes intercession with groans that cannot be expressed." As a Priest, does Jesus Christ, as our great High Priest, "enter into the holy of holiest?" that you will say belonged unto the priest alone, and none might enter into the holiest, and the holy of holiest but the priest. So do the saints too: see I pray, what communion and fellowship the saints have with Jesus Christ: says he, in the xth of the Hebrews and the 19th verse, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way," &c. Is our High Priest entered into the holy of holiest as a High Priest? You shall have communion in his priestly office too: and as he entered into the holy of holiest: so shall you too. Thus you see there is an answerableness in the saints, with what is in Christ. And indeed, herein does our spiritual regeneration, go beyond our generation: for, though a child be like unto the father in this, that he is a man like the father, and he hath a head like the father, and arms, and legs like the father: yet his feature may not be like the father's lineaments, not alike: but now, in our spiritual regeneration, there is such a likeness; as whatsoever grace, or holiness is in Jesus Christ, there is somewhat in all the saints that is answerable thereunto.

I. By way of application then: if this be so; that the saints do receive from Christ's fulness, grace for grace; grace answerable to the grace of Christ: that whatsoever grace or holiness there is in Christ, there is somewhat in all the saints that is answerable thereunto. Then what abundance of men and women are there, even living under the gospel; that have no present share or saving interest in Jesus Christ. Methinks I hear this doctrine crying aloud, and saying;

Stand by, profane men, stand by: you that are merely civil and moral people, stand by: and all hypocrites, stand by; as having no share and interest in Jesus Christ.

As for profane men: they will be drunk, and swear, and commit adultery and lie, and break the Sabbath: but would Jesus Christ do so? They count it the life of their life, and the soul of their soul, to be at a merry meeting, a jovial meeting: but would Jesus Christ do so? When Jesus Christ was upon the earth, he went up and down doing good, and scattering good, communicating good; and they go up and down scattering their sins: and is this grace for grace? is this answerable? I appeal to you.

As for those that are merely civil, moral. Though they will not swear great, and gross oaths: yet swear by their faith, and by their troth: but would Jesus Christ do so? They carry a secret spleen, and envy at the power of godlines, and those that have it: but would Jesus Christ do so? They frame up their religion, and their worship according to the times; if authority command it, they will do it, whatever it be: but would Jesus Christ do? When Jesus Christ was upon the earth, he was zealous, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," John ii. 17: but they are formal, and they are lukewarm: oh, is this grace for grace? is this your answerableness? and are these in Jesus Christ? As for those that are hypocrites: they have always some secret sin or other, some back door or other that they may go out at: but had Jesus Christ so? They lie contemplating, and chewing of the devil's cud; and are indulgent to their base thoughts, their sinful thoughts; but was Jesus Christ so? They savour gifts and expressions more than graces: but did Jesus Christ do so? They, though they seem to be mortified, and dead unto the grosser part of the world, meat, drink, and clothes: yet they are no way mortified, and dead unto the finer part of the world, their names, and their credits: was it thus with Jesus Christ? Indeed an hypocrite, through the strength of education, living under the gospel, may set himself to imitate Christ: but there is an artificial imitation; and a natural resemblance. A father may have two sons; the one that is unlike him, but imitates him: the other that does naturally resemble the father, and imitate him too. Such are the saints: being made partakers of the divine na-

ture; they naturally care for the things of Christ: hypocrites do not so. Behold! here is the character of a christian indeed, he hath grace for grace, whatever grace there is in Christ, he hath somewhat answerable thereunto. Oh! how few men and women are there in the world, that have a saving share and interest in Jesus Christ!

II. If this doctrine be true, what a happy and blessed thing is it for a man to be in Christ! Behold the dignity of the saints! Beloved, here is glory on this side glory: it is the glory and the honour of a man to be like to God; it is the glory and honour of a disciple to be like his master; it is the glory and honour of a child to be like his father; it is the glory and honour of a christian to be like unto Jesus Christ. Every christian hath the image of Christ drawn upon him. Had our Lord Jesus, the great and mighty Potentate, only come *by* a poor soul, and cast his skirt over him, and said unto the soul, Wear thou my livery: it had been a great honour to belong to Christ, to wear his livery: but behold! here is more than so, the saints do not only wear his livery, but they have his grace: and their grace is of the same nature with the very grace of Christ; as our grace should have been of the same nature with Adam's if Adam had stood. Yea, not only their grace is of the same nature; but look what grace Christ had, they have answerable to it. Had this great and royal loadstone, that draws all men's hearts after him; only touched our hearts that we might have followed him; what a mercy had it been! But behold! here is more than so: the saints they have grace for grace; whatsoever grace, or holiness there is in Christ, somewhat in a christian answerable thereunto. Oh, dignity! Oh, dignity! how can a christian but be welcome to God the Father, that does not come only in the name of Christ to him; but brings the image of Christ too with him, grace for grace. Oh, who would not be encouraged to get into Jesus Christ? Oh, you that are in Christ, do you know what privileges you walk under every day? You sometimes are ready to envy at the men of the world: but I pray, would you now change your condition with them? Such a one, he hath passion for passion; and pride for pride! and sin for sin with the world: and you have, grace for grace with Jesus Christ. Here is dignity! here is privilege indeed!

But you will say, All dignity calls for duty: suppose it be so; that whatsoever grace and holiness there is in Christ, there is somewhat answerable in my soul. Oh, what is my duty now that does flow from hence?

Surely, I answer, you cannot be proud of it, for then you shall not be like to Christ: who, though he thought it no robbery to be equal to God the Father, he humbled himself, and became of no reputation. Beloved, you know that all talents are to be improved; and the greater the talent the more improvement is to be made; and improvement is to be made of the same kind. It is our wisdom to observe what work God is a doing upon our souls, and to help forward that work. If God be working faith in our hearts, it is our duty to help forward the work of believing. If God be working patience in our hearts, it is our duty to help forward the work of patience. Look, now, what work that is, that God is doing in our hearts, and lives, for us; that work we are bound to help forward. Now, therefore, hath God drawn the image of Jesus Christ upon your hearts, so that that there is an habitual likeness in your souls unto Jesus Christ? then it is your duty to labour for an actual likeness; to be like unto him in all your workings, to live as he lived, and to do as he did, and to speak as he spake: labour more and more to be like unto him in your lives.

And if you say, How should that be? the apostle tells you: "Whom beholding, as in a glass, we are changed from glory to glory, according to his own image," 2 Cor. iii. 18. The serious, frequent beholding of Jesus Christ, is the only way to be like unto him. Beloved, your lives, they are divided into two parts; there is a doing part and a suffering part; as Christ's obedience was divided into active and passive obedience. Would you in the doing part of your life be like unto Christ? Behold him in his doing: *omnis Christi actio est instructio:* every action of Christ may be our instruction. Nothing in Christ not imitable; some things more especially. For example, our Lord and Saviour Christ, he made it his great business and design to bear witness to the truth: "For this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth," John xviii. 37.

Again, He would stoop to any work, though it lay much

below him: wash his disciples' feet; lay his excellencies at the feet of their infirmities.

Again, When he went upon any work, he was much in prayer first. Judas knew his praying-place.

And when he was at God's work, he would not know his own natural relations; and therefore says he to his mother, "Woman, my time is not yet come," John ii. 4. He does not say, Mother, my time is not yet come; but, Woman. In God's work he would not know his own natural relations.

If he had to deal with man: he had a high esteem of the saints, though they were never so low; and he had a low esteem of the wicked, though they were never so rich.

He did, again, so exercise one grace, as he might exercise another. He would so rejoice in God, as he might grieve for sin; not his own, but our's: and he did so grieve for sin, as he might rejoice in God. He was very zealous, yet he was wise too; he was wise, and yet he was zealous too.

He was a lamb and a lion; a lamb in his own cause, and a lion in God's cause. Oh, that in these things you would labour to be like unto him. It would be infinite, indeed it would be beyond me, if I should single out all his graces that were eminent in him. He was a heaven of grace, full of shining stars. Behold him in his doings! The only way for you to be like to him in your doing, is to behold him in his doings.

And so for his sufferings. Ye shall observe, he would not suffer till he was called unto it. Therefore he stood so precisely upon his time: "My time is not yet come," John vii. 8.

And when he was called unto it, he would not be put out of his way. If they cast water upon him, it made him flame the more: "Get thee behind me, Satan," Matt. xvi. 23. In all his sufferings he had an especial eye to other men's good; then he went very quietly and meekly: "As a lamb dumb before the shearers, so he opened not his mouth," Isa. liii. 7. And he was more sensible, which I pray mark, of God's withdrawing from him in his sufferings, than of all the pains, disgrace and misery that he did undergo. And therefore, when he was upon the cross, says he, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. xxvii. 46. The sun did forsake him too: the sun did withdraw his light: and yet he does not say, O sun, why doest thou thus forsake

me? The disciples all forsook him: and yet he does not cry out Thomas, why dost thou now forsake me? Peter, why dost thou now forsake me? He cries not out of them. His body was nailed to the cross: and he does not cry out and say, oh, my hands; oh, my body; oh, the pain that I endure; but here he cries out of this: oh, "my God, my God, why hast thou foraaken me?" He was more sensible of God's withdrawing from him, than of all the other miseries that he did endure. Oh! my beloved, that you would labour now for to be like unto Jesus Christ; in your doing; in your suffering for to be like to him. The sight of a gracious Christ, will make us gracious if any thing will do it. Labour now to be like unto him, more and more. This is your duty that does flow from hence. You that are saints, you that are Christ's, you that have received grace for grace; Christ expects work for work, and doing for doing; that you should shine as he shined; and that you should live as he lived; that you should so walk, and be in the world, that those that do live with you may say; Here is a man, or woman that is like to Christ, that hath received grace for grace: now we see this doctrine true; I cannot think of any grace of Christ, but I see it shining forth in this man and woman. This is your duty.

III. By way of application. If this be true: that the saints and people of God, do receive of Christ's fulness, even grace for grace: how infinitely are we bound unto God the Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ! glorious is the fellowship and communion that the saints have with Christ, as ye heard; they have not only fellowship with him in his sufferings, to have suffering for suffering; but they have fellowship with him in his graces, grace for grace; and this fellowship hath God the Father brought you into. Mark therefore, that place again which you have in the 1 Cor. i. 9. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." By whom ye are called unto this fellowship. Therefore still the apostle, he blesses God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Blessed be God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Not barely, blessed be God, but, "Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Beloved! ye know there are two great gifts, that the Scripture makes mention of. First God makes the world, and man: and having made man, he gives all the world to man; there is one gift, and a great gift. Man having fallen, and lost his former happiness; Christ comes into the world, the second person becomes man; and this man he gives unto the world.

First, He gave the world to man: and secondly, he gives Christ, this man, unto the world: and his second gift is the greater gift: it is a greater gift when Jesus Christ was given unto the world, than that the whole world was given to man. For now, take the world; and though it hath many glorious pieces of God's workmanship; his power, and wisdom: yet God may give all the world to man, and not give him, himself; but when he gives Jesus Christ to man, he gives himself with him. Though there be many several pieces, beautiful pieces of God's workmanship in the world; yet they carry with them but the footsteps of God. Oh, but Jesus Christ he is the express image of the Father; and when he gives this express image unto a soul; as Christ is the express image of the Father, so the soul becomes the express image of Jesus Christ. Ye know what the apostle says, concerning our Saviour Christ: mark, "In whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," Col. ii. 9. That is, look what attributes, and excellencies are in God, the same are in Jesus Christ as Mediator: whatsoever attribute is in God, as God; the same shines forth in Jesus Christ as Mediator. The fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily; and the fulness of Christ dwells in every saint spiritually. Jesus Christ, he hath perfection for perfection; he hath attribute for attribute; he hath excellency for excellency with God the Father. And every gracious, godly soul, he hath grace for grace from Jesus Christ: of his fulness have we received, grace for grace: as the fulness of God the Father dwells in him bodily, so the fulness of Christ dwells in every christian spiritually.

And this fellowship hath God the Father called you unto: "By whom we have fellowship," 1 Cor i. 9; this hath God the Father called you unto. Oh! how infinitely are you bound unto God the Father, to honour and bless the Father! When ye look upon the Son, methinks you should bless the

Father! and when ye look upon the Father, you should love the Son. As a mother does; when she looks upon her child, she loves the father; and when she looks upon the father, she loves the child again: so a christian, when he looks upon Jesus Christ, he should bless the Father; and when he looks upon the Father, he should bless Jesus Christ, and love Jesus Christ: Dear Father, thou hast not only given us thy Son, but given us thy Son in such a way, that we should have grace for grace, answerable to his grace: is this after the manner of men? Oh, therefore, why should not we all say, Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, you, you that love Jesus Christ, bless the Father: and you that bless the Father, love Jesus Christ: take yourselves to be infinitely bound unto God the Father, who hath given you such a Christ as this, of whom you should have grace for grace.

I have done. Only I would leave one exhortation with the saints that have received of Christ's fulness thus, grace for grace: it is thus, mark it I pray.

IV. Is this true, that of his fulness ye have all received, grace for grace, answerableness of grace? that ye have fellowship with Jesus in all his graces? Then be for ever contented to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in all his sufferings; and truly, well may ye be contented if you have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings; if you have suffering for suffering, ye shall have grace for grace, and grace for glory; if ye partake with him in his sufferings, ye shall partake with him in his graces, and partake with him in his glory. I say, well may ye be contented to have fellowship with him in his suffering; for if you have suffering for suffering, you shall have comfort for comfort: if you have fellowship with him in his sufferings, you shall have fellowship with him in his comforts too. Mark ye, When Jesus Christ suffered, had he a Deity to support him? So shall ye have. When Jesus Christ suffered, had he angels to minister to him? So shall you have. When Jesus Christ suffered, did he see the travail of his soul? So shall you see it. When Jesus Christ was lift up, he drew all men after him: so shall you do: when you are lift up for the truth upon the cross; you are apt to think, now will the truth suf-

fer, now will the cause of God fall to the ground; but remember: if you have fellowship in his graces; if you have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings; you shall have fellowship with Christ in his comforts. This was one of his comforts, when he was lift up upon the cross, then he drew all men after him; so when you come to be lift up upon the cross, then shall men be drawn after the truths that you suffer for: and never shall men be more drawn after the truths that you suffer for, than when you come to be lift up upon the cross to suffer for them. Oh, who would not be willing to partake with the Lord Jesus Christ in his sufferings, to have fellowship with him in his sufferings, to have suffering for suffering! It is observed, that our Saviour never met with any great debasement, but at that time, in the midst of that debasement, there was some breakings forth of glory. He was born in a stable, he was laid in a manger; here was his first debasement: here glory breaks forth; the wise men come and fall down before him, and offer gifts; frankincense and myrrh.

Again, He was baptized: he needed not to have been baptized; he was clean enough in his nature, he put our clothes upon him, stood in our nature: now he hears a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son," Matt. iii. 17.

Again, you read of him riding upon an ass: not riding in a coach drawn with lions, or drawn with elephants, but riding upon an ass, in a mean way, a debased way; now breaks forth some glory, now they cry, Hosanna, hosanna to him.

Again, upon the cross, there he was most debased; then breaks forth some glory: the sun, that stands still, and vails his face, as one astonished at the world's Saviour: now does the vail of the temple rend in sunder, now glory breaks forth in the midst of his debasement; thus it was with Christ. Have you suffering with him for sufferings? Have you fellowship with Christ in his sufferings? you shall have fellowship with Christ in his comforts. Oh, therefore I beseech you, be contented now to have suffering for suffering with Jesus Christ; and whensoever any suffering comes, especially for the truth, boggle not at it, be content and say within yourselves, Oh, blessed be the Lord, that hath called

me out to this work! I shall have this fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, I shall now have suffering for suffering, therefore I shall have comfort for comfort, I shall have grace for grace, I shall have glory for glory: oh, who would not be encouraged? I leave this exhortation with you, comfort yourselves in these words, and never startle at suffering, as heretofore; but make account of this, that if you have grace for grace, ye may meet with suffering for suffering; but then you shall have comfort for comfort, and ye shall have glory for glory. Think on these things, and the Lord give us to practise them.

THE

SPIRITUAL LIFE

AND

IN-BEING OF CHRIST IN ALL BELIEVERS.

IN

FIVE SERMONS,

PREACHED AT STEPNEY,

AND OTHER PLACES.

A. D. 1648.

TO THE READER.

I THOUGHT good to give thee notice, that these Sermons were taken from the author's mouth when he preached them. A word spoken is soon forgotten, but what is written remains, and may do you, your children, and children's children good; and this is the intent and desire of the author. When you view this mite of his, you may see something of Christ in it; let it be your care to see what you can find of Christ in yourselves: "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" This work adviseth you, not to rest upon notions, for then you do no other than feed your precious souls with fancies, which is as unfitting, and more dangerous food for your souls, than the husks were for the prodigal's body: it is a real Christ, not a notional Christ, must satisfy your souls. We all know there is store of gold in the Indies, but we are never the richer for it unless we have it in possession; neither is it our hearing of Christ, nor our knowing there is a Christ, but our having of Christ in possession that benefits our souls. Hast thou a proud heart? read this book, and it will teach thee humility. Hast thou a despairing heart? read this book, and it will teach thee to believe. Hast thou a legal heart? read this book, it will teach thee to be evangelical. Hast thou a secure heart? read this book, it will teach thee to be watchful. Hast thou a froward heart? read this book, it will teach thee to be meek. If thou wouldst come to Christ with a budget of duties upon thy shoulders, old Adam's proud principle, then thou must not look here, for he labours to empty thee of thy own righteousness, and send thee naked to Jesus Christ, who came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If thou lookest for quaint speculations, and eloquent expressions of human wisdom, which administer as little comfort to the pastor as edification to the people; in truth here is nothing to please fantastical ears with whimsies, it was neither spoken nor written for any such intent: the words were spoken for edification, and were, by the desire of friends, written for the same intent. If, then, thou lovest plain dealing, and to benefit thy soul, read, and this book will teach thee to leave the success to God: when Paul hath planted, and Apollos hath watered, it is God must give the increase. Art thou a sinner? here is mercy for thee, here is Christ for thee. Art thou a drunkard? here is water of life for thee, which if thou drinkest thou shalt never thirst again. Art thou covetous? here is riches for thee, spiritual riches, durable riches that will not fade. Art thou profane? read this, and it will teach thee to be holy. Art thou a saint? here is comfort for thee, even the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Art thou in darkness? here is light for thee, "Jesus Christ the true light, that lightens every one that comes into the world:" he shall be ten times more constant to thy soul than the sun in the firmament. Art thou weak in parts: weak in faith? weak in grace? read this book, and if the Lord be pleased to speak to thy soul, here is strength for thee, even the mighty God. Art thou poor? here is Christ, and "the earth is his and the fulness thereof:" it is laid up in his hand for thee, it is the purchase of his blood, he hath bought it for thee, it is thy own, and he doth but keep it for thee, thou mayest go boldly to him for it; though thou art loth to borrow, and ashamed to

beg, yet thou mayest go boldly for thy own. This book, courteous reader, will teach thee to depend on God, to wait on Christ for all. He feeds the young ravens, he tends the sparrows, he clothes the lillies, therefore be sure he will not let his children want, whatsoever storms be without. Keep Christ, and thou shalt have peace, yea, the Prince of Peace within; then thou shalt have peace when all the world is in trouble, then thou shalt be kept safe in the hour of temptation, which shall come to try all those that live upon the face of the earth. Prepare a place for the Lord Jesus Christ in thy heart, and he will provide a mansion for thee in his Father's house, where thou shalt sin no more. and sorrow no more, but God shall wipe away all tears from thy eyes. Always remember, thou hast here no abiding place, but seekest one to come. This, courteous reader, is the course and aim of the author in this treatise for thy benefit, he spends his spirits that thou mayest be happy, that thou mayest grow up from strength to strength, until thou comest to be a perfect man in Jesus Christ; and this, also, is the earnest desire and prayer of him to Almighty God, for thee, who is, and shall always remain, thine to love and serve in the gospel,

WILLIAM GREENHILL.

THE

SPIRITUAL LIFE.

SERMON I.

" Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."
GAL. II. 20.

IN this epistle, the apostle Paul does industriously prove, that a man is justified by faith in Christ alone, and not by the works of the law. Which he plainly affirms at the 16th verse, " Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." But if a man be not justified by the works of the law, then a man may live as he lists, may cease from working. Not so, says the apostle, for so " we ourselves should be found sinners, and Christ would be made the minister of sin, which God forbid," verse 17. " Yea, and I should build again the things which I have destroyed, and make myself a transgressor," verse 18. " But I through the law, am dead unto the law, that I might live unto God," verse the 19th.

But if a man be justified by faith alone, and so by the death of Christ, then a man is crucified with Christ; and if a man be crucified, or if you be crucified with Christ, how then do you live? Yes, says he at the 20th verse, " I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

" Nevertheless," or, now I live; " I live," that is, a spiritual life. There is a natural life, and there is a spiritual life. He does not here speak of the natural life, when he says, " Nevertheless I live;" because he adds, " yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" that is, spiritually. And when he says, " I live," he speaks it in the person of every believer; not in his own person, but he personates a believer all along.

" I through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live to God;" I a believer; and I am crucified with Christ. I a believer. And, " Nevertheless I live." All along he does personate a believer, and does not speak in his own person, but in the person of a believer. And he says here, " Nevertheless I live." He had said before, that " we are justified by faith alone, and not by the works of the law;" and that a believer was crucified with Christ. Now, says he, this doctrine that I have preached unto you, is no way opposite unto our spiritual life, or unto our holiness; yet, now I live, or " nevertheless I live." From whence then you may observe these two things.

First, That every true believer, every godly, gracious man, is a living man, lives a spiritual life, is in the state of life.

Secondly, That our justification by faith alone, and our being crucified with Christ; is no enemy, but a friend unto this spiritual life. " Nevertheless I live."

First of all. Every godly, gracious man, is a living man, is in the state of life, lives a spiritual life.

And this ye have most expressly, in that vith chapter of John, at the 40th verse: " This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." But, though he shall have everlasting life hereafter, it may be he hath not this life for the present. Look therefore what he says at the 47th verse, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." It is not said, he shall have everlasting life, but he hath everlasting life; everlasting life is begun in him already. And that ye may be the more sure of it, he gives you a double verily, " Verily, verily I say unto ye, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." But how can this be? Nay, how should it be otherwise? for a man's life is as his meat is; and says our Saviour, " I am the bread of life," at the 48th verse. Then at the 54th verse, " Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. For my flesh (at the 55th verse) is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." So that ye see, this

chapter is full of it, here is a cloud of witnesses. I say, therefore, That every godly, gracious man, is a living man, and fives another life from the life of the world, a spiritual life, and is in the state of spiritual life.

I. For the opening of this truth unto ye, we must first of all inquire, What this spiritual life is? Take therefore this description of it: It is that supernatural perfection of soul, whereby a man being united unto Christ, by the Spirit, is able to act, move, and work towards God as his utmost end.

1. It is a supernatural perfection. There is some perfection in every life. Life is the greatest good and perfection, death is the greatest evil. Therefore when the Lord threatened Adam, to punish him for eating the forbidden fruit, he says, "The day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the DEATH," Gen. ii. 17. Death is the greatest evil, and so life is the greatest good and perfection. And this the devil knew full well, when he said, " Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. So that life is a perfection. But I say, this spiritual life, it is the supernatural perfection of the soul. And therefore in the ivth chapter of the Ephesians, and the 18th verse, this life of the saints, the very life of the saints is called, the life of God. It is a supernatural perfection of the soul therefore.

2. As it is a supernatural perfection of soul, so it rises from our union with Christ, by the Spirit. A man is united to God by faith, and by the Spirit: and as our outward life does arise from the union between the soul and the body; and though the body be never so fair or full, yet if it be not united to the soul, it is but a dead carcase: so our spiritual life, it doth arise from our union with Christ; and though a man have never so many moral virtues, and his conversation be never so fair, yet if not united to Christ by the Spirit, he is but a dead man, spiritually a dead man. And therefore saith the apostle here in the text, " Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

3. As it arises from our union with Christ, by the Spirit; so, I say, it is that supernatural perfection, whereby a man is able to act, and move, and work towards God as his utmost and last end. And therefore says the apostle in the former verse, " I through the law, am dead unto the law, that I may

live to God;" to God, as my last and my utmost end. And when a man is able to act, and move, and work towards God, as his last and utmost end, then he is said to live spiritually. So that when ye have this description of our spiritual life, I repeat it again, it is that supernatural perfection of soul, whereby a man being united unto Christ, by the Spirit, is able to act, and move, and work towards God, as his utmost end.

II. Whereby may it appear, that every godly, gracious man, is thus a living man, made partaker of this spiritual life, so as to be able to act, and move, and work towards God as his utmost end?

I will take but the three ordinary lives that are in the world. The vegetative life, the life of plants and herbs. The sensitive life, the life of beasts. And the rational life, the life of man. And I will shew ye, that the essential properties of all these lives, are in a spiritual way in the godly; and then the argument will lie thus: if the essential properties of all these lives be in a spiritual way in every godly man: then certainly, every godly, gracious man, is a living man, and in the state of life; living another life from the life of the world.

1. Take the life of plants and herbs, or of flowers, and what is the essential property of the vegetative life? It is to grow; no sooner hath a thing the vegetative life, but it does grow. All plants, and herbs, and flowers, they grow, and trees they grow, because they have this vegetative life. And so the saints do, they grow in grace. It is said of them in the lxxxivth Psalm, "They go from strength to strength." It is an Hebraism, and it notes augmentation; *from, to,* notes augmentation. And the like Hebraisms ye have in the New Testament. In Rom. i. 27. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith." It notes the augmentation of faith. And so in 2 Cor. iii. 18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." It notes an augmentation of glory. And so, "They go from strength to strength." That is, they grow in strength; it notes, an augmentation of their strength. But suppose they do want the means, and want the ordinances; do they grow then? Yes. It is that which is said in the same Psalm;

"Though they walk through the valley of Baca, and be in a dry place, where no water is; yet they go on from strength to strength." And, "we *all* with open face beholding as in glass, the mirror of the Lord, are changed from glory to glory." Not some, but all; all believers, and all the godly, they do grow in grace. And this ye know, is the difference between a painted child, and a living child; take a living child, and though he be but little, and very weak, yet he grows bigger. But now, a child that is painted upon a wall, a painted child grows not: and if a man come to ye and say, What is the reason that this child does not grow? two or three years agone he was as big as now he is? you will easily answer, Because he is but a painted child, he is not a living child; if he were a living child he would grow. Now the saints and people of God, they grow in grace, and therefore they are living children: they are living children, and therefore they grow in grace.

2. What is the essential property of the sensitive life, of the life of beasts, of the life of birds? for they live another life than the life of trees, and flowers, and herbs; what is the essential property of that kind of life? The essential property of that kind of life is, To be sensible of good or evil suitable unto it. And so the saints and people of God are: they are sensible also, they are not past feeling, as it is said of wicked men, but they are sensible of things suitable to them. Indeed, they have not the sense and feeling of things as they would, or do desire: but there are three things which the saints and people of God are all sensible of. They are sensible of their sins; especially if they be committed against their knowledge. They are sensible of the hidings of God's face from them. And they are sensible of the church's miseries.

They are very sensible of their sins: and therefore Paul cries out, "O wretched man that I am! I find a law in my members; O wretched man that I am!" Rom. vii. 23, 24. Ye read in other places of his epistles, he says, "He will rejoice concerning his afflictions and infirmities," 2 Cor. xii. 10. He tells us how he was stoned, and how he was imprisoned, scourged, whipped; and in all that, he does not cry out "O wretched man that I am! But now, finding the law in his members, he is more sensible of that than of any afflic-

tion; here now he cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver!"

And as for the hiding of God's face: the people of God are the most sensible of that too. For ye know what David said, "As a sword in my bones, while they said unto me, Where is now thy God?" Psalm xlii. 10. The Lord had hid his face from him. Oh, says he, this is a sword in my bones, while men say unto me, Where is now thy God? And so our Lord and Saviour Christ, when he was upon the cross, he cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. vii. 46. He does not cry out unto his apostles and disciples, Why have you forsaken me? They all left him, and yet he did not say, O Thomas, O Peter, O Matthew, oh, all my disciples and apostles, why have you forsaken me? And the sun had withdrawn his light; and he does not say, Why hast thou forsaken me? He felt many pains, being pierced through, nailed unto the cross; and yet he does not cry out and say, Oh, what pains and tortures do I feel! but, as sensible of this more than of all his outward torment, he cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And as it is with the Head, so it is with the members.

And, as unto the miseries of the churches. Ye know how it was with Jeremiah; "Oh, that my head were a fountain of tears, that I could weep day and night for the slain of my people," Jer. ix. 1. Thus, I say, a godly man, though he have not the sense and feeling of his sin, and of other things as he would have, yet these three things he is especially sensible of: sensible of his own sin, especially that committed against knowledge; the hiding of God's face from him; and the miseries of the churches. Surely, therefore, he is alive, he hath this essential property of this life in a spiritual way, and therefore he is alive, and in the state of life.

3. Take now the third life, the life of reason, the rational life, the life of man. And what is the essential property of that life? It is to understand, to know, and to reflect upon a man's own actions, whether they be good or evil. A beast does many actions, but a beast hath not power to reflect upon his own action, to consider whether it be good or evil when he hath done the action. Herein a man is distinct from a beast. A beast understands not, knows not, is not able to reflect upon his own action, and to consider whether it be

good or evil when he hath done it. But, now, a man that hath this rational life, is; and the more of man in a man, the more he is able to reflect upon his own action. Look, I pray, into the xlvith chapter of Isaiah, and there ye shall find this to be the essential property of a man: at the 8th verse, "Remember this, and shew yourselves men." Wherein? "Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors." Reflect upon your own action, and consider what ye have done, and thus ye will shew yourselves to be men, to have the life of men in you. And upon this account, when as the prodigal bethought himself, then he is said to return unto himself. Now every godly, gracious man hath this power, to reflect upon his own action. And therefore converting Ephraim is brought in thus, "smiting himself upon his thigh," saying, "Oh, what have I done?" Jer. xxxi. 19. And in that of the Epistle to the Corinthians, it is said, "Know ye not, how that Christ is in you, unless ye be reprobates," 2 Cor. xiii. 5. That is, unless ye be reprobates, ye may know that Christ is in you. A reprobate, indeed, does not reflect upon his own action; but as a beast he goes on: he prays, may be, and does not reflect upon his prayer when he hath done; he hears the word, and does not reflect upon his hearing when he hath done; he sins against God, and does not reflect upon his own action and sin, smiting himself upon his thigh, saying, Oh, what have I done? But, now, every godly, gracious man does thus reflect upon his own action, and is able to do it. So then, take the argument in the whole, and it lies thus: If a godly, gracious man, have all the essential properties of those three lives, in a spiritual way and manner; then certainly he is in the state of life, and does live a spiritual life. Now, as ye have heard, every godly, gracious man, hath all the essential properties of all these three lives, in a spiritual way and manner, and therefore, certainly he does live a spiritual life, he is in the state of life.

III. But how may it appear that others are not in this state of life? that a wicked man is not in this state of life? that a wicked man is a dead man, spiritually dead? that the godly, and the godly only are made partakers of this spiritual life, and that others are not?

I answer, Our Lord and Saviour does speak expressly, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life," John v. 40.

But look into the iiird chapter of John, and the 36th verse, and ye shall find these words: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life." Shall not see life; mark those words, he shall not come within the view or sight of life, or of the good things of life. He does not barely say, He shall not *live:* no, but he shall not *see* life, he shall not *see* the good things of life. So that plainly, then, he that believeth not is a dead man, spiritually a dead man, and lives not this spiritual life.

But all motion comes from life: can a man act, move and work and not be alive? Even wicked men, they pray, and they hear, and they read, and they meditate, and they act, and move and work towards God, and they do many good things, and have many moral virtues; and can all this be, and yet no life in them?

I answer, Yes: for ye know a watch, or a jack, or a clock, they all move, and act, and work, and yet they have no life. Though a wicked man may act, and move, and work towards God, yet, notwithstanding, that motion does but arise from the natural perfection that is left in him by the fall. Take a civil man, and though he have many moral virtues, what is there in him that lies beyond the reach of nature, with the dye of gospel education. But, now, this spiritual life, it is a supernatural perfection. Indeed, it is said of hypocrites, they have a name to live: aye, but they are dead; they are accounted living, but they live not. Why? Because they are not united unto Christ by the Spirit, which is the other property of the spiritual life. This spiritual life, I say, it is the supernatural perfection of the soul, whereby a man is able to act, and move, and work towards God as his utmost end. Now there is no wicked man that is able to move towards God as his utmost end: for, as the schools well speak, wicked men, they do use what they should enjoy, that is God: and they do enjoy what they should use, that is the world. What wicked man is there in all the world, that is able to move and work towards God as his last and his utmost end? There is a two-fold end: there is an hither end and a remote end; a hithermost end and a remote or one's utmost end. A wicked man, indeed, he may have God as the hither end of his action, but himself is at the utmost end. Look, I pray, into the second of Samuel, the iiird chapter, at the 17th and 18th verses, and there you

shall read to this purpose: "Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David, in times past, to be king over you; now then do it, for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel." Here, now, he had God in his eye, and the fulfilling of the Lord's promise; here is one end why he would bring about the kingdom to David: "For the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel." But now look a little higher, and you shall see what his utmost end was in bringing about the kingdom to David: he falls out with the son of Saul: and Saul's son comes to him, and says, "Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?" verse 7. Whereupon Abner was very angry; at the 8th verse, "Then was Abner very wrath for the words of Ishbosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah doth shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman? so do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so do I to him; to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel." Mark, here was self; he would be revenged of him. Indeed, he set God at the hither end of the action, but it was self that was at the utmost end of the action. And so it is with a wicked man; though he may have God at the hither end of his action, yet himself is at the utmost end of his action. It is not so with a godly, gracious man; but though self may be at the hither end of his action, God is the utmost end: and if you ask him, Neighbour, friend, why do you thus pray, and hear, and read, and meditate? Oh, says he, that my poor soul may be comforted; for I am one that am of a troubled spirit. Well, but why would you be comforted? I would therefore be comforted, that I might serve God the better. Here his own comfort is at the beginning of the action, but God is at the utmost end. Take a wicked man, I say, and though he doth act, and move, and work towards God, yet he wants a supernatural perfection, he is not united to Christ by the Spirit, he does not act, and move towards God as his utmost end. But, now, every godly, gracious man doth, and therefore he,

and he alone is the living man, that hath this spiritual life, that is in this state of life.

Is all a civil man's civility nothing? and are all moral virtues nothing? Are all these then good for nothing?

I answer, Yes, they are in themselves good, and they are good for something, but they are not good to make a man spiritually alive. If a man come and offer you a brass sixpence, or a brass shilling; and you say, No, it will not go: and if he reply, and say to ye, But though it be brass, is it good for nothing? you will say, Yes, it is good for something, brass is good for something, but it is not good for money, it will not go for pay, it will not pay your debt, it is is not sufficient to fetch you out of prison; it will not make you alive, it is not good for this. So now say I: Do ye ask whether these be good for nothing? I say, Yes, they are good, all moral virtues are in themselves good; but they are not good for to pay your debt, they are not good to make you alive, they can never make you spiritually alive; it is only grace, and union with Jesus Christ by the Spirit, that must make a man alive, spiritually alive; and this only the saints and people of God have; and therefore they only are the living men, every child of God is a living man, and none else.

If this be so, what abundance of comfort is here, unto all the saints and people of God. He only lives, comparatively, that lives this spiritual life: the saints and people of God they are alive. Doest thou therefore believe? Art thou united to Jesus Christ by the Spirit? Then thou art alive, and in the state of life, made partaker of this spiritual life. And dost thou know what it is to be made partaker of this spiritual life? dost thou know what a life it is that now thou livest? It is a life better and beyond the life that thou shouldest have lived in the state of innocency: for as the second Adam is more excellent than the first Adam was; "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, but the second Adam was made a quickening spirit," 1 Cor. xv. 45; so that life that comes from Christ the second Adam, is better and beyond that life that you should have had from the first Adam in the state of innocency.

Of all lives, this spiritual life, that now I am speaking of, is the most pleasant life. In the xxxvith Psalm, says the

Psalmist concerning the godly, at the 8th verse, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Now, as Austin doth well observe upon that place, The river hath many waves, one following upon another: and so are the pleasures of the saints, the spiritual pleasures; one wave, one pleasure following upon another; and it is a deep river. Oh! but a river may be dry. Nay it cannot be dry if it be maintained with a fountain, and with springs. Now see what follows, at the 9th verse, "They shall satisfy themselves of the river of thy pleasures: why? "for with thee is the fountain of life." So that, if a man do but enjoy God in Christ, and be united unto Christ by the Spirit, he hath this life, which shall be as a river of pleasures maintained with a fountain. Yea, this life it shall know no end. Your lives now, they run into death: but this life, this spiritual life, it shall know no end. The apostle argues unto the Romans, that they should die no more, because they had communion with Christ in his death: and therefore, says he, "In that he died once, he shall die no more," Rom. vi. 10. And so, you having communion with Christ in his death, you shall die no more: once alive spiritually, and ye shall die no more. Who can go to heaven and pull Christ out of heaven? In the iind chapter of Paul unto the Ephesians, the 5th verse, says the apostle there, "Even when we were dead in trespassess and sins, hath he quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Jesus Christ." Here is sitting together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus; and we are raised up in Christ. So then, if once ye have this spiritual life in Christ, ye shall never die again spiritually.

And this life, that now I am speaking of, it is of all other lives, the most communicative life. A man does communicate life unto his child; but his child is not able presently, as soon as it is born, to communicate life unto another child. One beast does communicate life unto another; the sheep communicates life unto the lamb: but the lamb as soon as it is brought forth is not able to communicate life to another, and get another. And so, the herb communicates life to another, but not presently as soon as it is an herb. But now, no sooner does a man partake of this spiritual life, but

he is presently able to communicate life unto another: "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren," Luke xxii. 32. No sooner was Paul made alive by another, but he presently goes and communicates this life unto his brethren.

And let me tell you or one thing more: though your sins have been very great while you were in the state of death, before you were made partakers of this spiritual life: yet when ye once come to partake of this spiritual life, the Lord will look upon all your former sin under another consideration, a mollifying consideration. "This my son was dead, (says the father of the prodigal,) and is now alive," Luke xv. 24: that is all. He does not say, This was a whoremonger, or this was a rioter, or this was a spendthrift; and now he is returned and come home to me for meat: no, but in mollifying terms, only thus, "This my son was dead, and is now alive." And ye know what is said of David, David committed a great sin in the murder of Uriah: and yet says the Lord concerning David, "He turned not aside to the right hand or to the left, save only in the matter of Uriah," 1 Kings xv. 5. He does not say, Save only in the murder of Uriah; but in a mollifying term, he says only so, save only in the matter of Uriah: a mollifying term: why? because that David had repented of the sin, and now the Lord does not look upon it, but under this mollifying term; save only in the matter; not in the murder of Uriah, but in the matter of Uriah. And so, if thou do repent, and turn unto the Lord thy God, though thy sins have been very great in the state of thy death, yet if once ye come to be made partaker of this spiritual life, the Lord will look upon all thy former sins under other terms, and mollifying considerations: He will not say, Here is this poor wretch, that now I do look upon as a drunkard, or a swearer; but he will say thus; This my son was dead, but is now alive: this my daughter was dead, and is now alive. Thus the Lord will look upon your former evils, if once ye come to be made partakers of this spiritual life. Oh, therefore, what a blessed condition are the saints and people of God in, that are made partakers of this same spiritual life. I remember it is written of a certain martyr in the primitive times, a woman; when she was brought before the enemies of the gospel, they put divers questions to her, and she ans-

wered all their questions with one answer, which was this: *Christiana sum*, I AM A CHRISTIAN. When they said unto her, Woman, art thou married or no? I am a christian, says she. What parents hast thou, woman? I am a christian, says she. Woman, where dost thou live? I am a christian, says she. She answered all their questions with this, I am a christian. And so, methinks a man may answer all objections that are made unto him with this: I am alive in Christ. But, thou hast a dead estate, much of it is lost at sea, or land. Well, but I am alive in Christ. But hast thou not a dead husband, or a dead wife, or a dead child? I am alive in Christ. But, is not thy name dead, and buried under reproaches? I am alive in Christ. A poor soul may answer all with this; I am alive in Christ. Oh, what a blessed thing is it, for a man to be made partaker of this spiritual life! This is the condition of all the saints. Art thou therefore alive, and made partaker of this spiritual life? blessed art thou from the Lord, and thou shalt be blessed to all eternity.

I am afraid that I have not this spiritual life; for my heart is dead, and cold and stiff: and dead men, they are cold and stiff, very stiff: and truly so it is with me; my heart is cold, and dead, and stiff, and therefore I fear I am free among the dead, and not free among the living.

I answer, Have ye not heard, that there is a deadness which is opposite to liveliness, as well as a death that is opposite to life? And were thine heart dead, with a death opposite to life, thou couldst not feel it. And I appeal to thee; if that thy soul be alive in opposition to death; hast thou not more cause to be thankful, that thy soul is alive in opposition to death, than to be discouraged, that thy soul is dead in opposition to liveliness?

But there is a difference, ye know, between the coldness of a living man, and the coldness of a dead man. Take a dead man, and if he be cold, it is not all your fires will put warmth into him, or your *Aqua-vitæ*, or your chafing or rubbing of him, or your warm beds that will make him warm. But now take a man that is cold, and living; and if ye chafe him, or bring him to the fire, or lay him in a good warm bed; he recovers his warmth again. And so it is with a godly heart though cold, yet bring it unto the ordinance,

either publicly, or privately, and it recovers its warmth again: and hath it not been even so with some of you?

It is true, a dead man is stiff. But have you found yourselves in a way of sin, an evil way; and are you so stiff therein, as ye will not be put out of your way, no, not by admonition? then ye are stiff indeed. There are two men that are out of the way, suppose, the traveller, and the thief: the traveller is out of his way: and if you come to him and say, Sir, you are much out of your way: he hearkens to ye, and he thanks ye, and he returns into his way again. But if ye come to a thief and say, Sir, you are out of your way; he laughs, and scorns, and comes not into the way. So, there are some indeed, that are out of their way; and if you do come to them and tell them, that they are out of their way; they will bless and praise the Lord for your admonition, and labour to return into their way again. But some there are, that if you tell them, that they are out of their way, they will rather scorn and jeer at it; What have you to do to meddle with me? what have you to do to meddle with my ways? meddle with your own matters. These men are stiff, they are stiff indeed; why? because they are dead: they are stiff in the way of their sin, and they will not be stirred out, no, not by admonition, why? because they are dead. But I appeal to ye, whether is it thus with ye or no? Do not ye say rather, I praise the Lord, though sometimes, yea many times, I am out of the way, and in the way of sin; yet I can rejoice in an admonition, and bless the Lord for an admonition: yea, this I can speak, though my heart be sometimes very cold, yet I have found heat, and warmth recovered again, either under a public, or under a private ordinance: well then, be of good comfort, thou art not dead; though thou mayest be asleep, yet thou mayest be among the living.

I am afraid that I am not alive spiritually, that I am not made partaker of this spiritual life, because I do not grow in grace; and this is the difference between a living child and a dead child: the dead painted child grows not, but the living child grows; and the Lord knows I do not grow in grace, and therefore I fear that I am but the painted child of God, and I am not the living child.

I answer, If this were true, it were ill: for growth, indeed,

is a sign of life. But whoever you are that make this objection, and lie under this fear: give me leave to propound to ye two or three questions.

Do ye not grow more out of love with your own righteousness, and with your own duties, as to the resting on them? The stronger a man grows in grace, the more he grows into Christ; and so, the more he grows off from himself and his own righteousness.

Do ye not find, that ye are less subject to be offended now than heretofore ye were? When a man is in the state of nature, and in spiritual death, then he is apt to be offended against all actions, and against the good way of God, and the people of God; this is your godliness, these are your professors, and they are all so: very apt to be offended. When a man is converted, and turned to God; while he is weak in grace, he is apt to stumble, and to be offended; but the stronger he grows in grace, the less he will be offended.

Whether do ye not grow more off from the youthful things that godly men look unto? I say, the things that the youthfulness of godliness is taken much with? Ye know that youth is taken with many things that the state of man is not. A child, a little child is taken with babies, and with rattles, and with toys; and when it grows bigger to eight, nine, or ten years old, it is taken with other things; and as the child grows into a man, so he grows off from those childish and youthful things. There are some things that the youth of godliness is taken withal; as, taken much with expressions in prayer, and duty, and hearing the word; and taken much with the sense and feeling of God's love; this is good, and they cannot live without it. But when a man grows into more strength of grace, then he grows off from these things that the youth of godliness is taken withal, and he is more able to live without them; heretofore he could not live without such an expression in duty, and he could not live by faith alone: but now, when once he grows to a man in grace, he is more grown off from that which the youth of godliness is taken withal. Now upon all these things, I appeal to ye. Whoever ye are that makes this objection, and say, Ye cannot grow in grace, and therefore afraid that ye are but the painted child of God, and not the living child of God: whe-

ther do ye not find, that ye are more grown off from those things that the youth of godliness is taken with? Whether do ye not find, that ye are less subject to be offended now, than you were heretofore? And are you not more grown off from your own righteousness? Yes, I must needs say this, through the Lord's goodness and mercy to me, though I am not grown in grace as I desire, yet I am more grown off from my own righteousness than I was heretofore: and I am not so subject to be offended at the good ways of God and the people of God, as heretofore: and, I praise God I can live off from those things that the youth of godliness is taken withal: well, be of good comfort, thou art grown, and thou art not the painted child, but, for aught I know, thou mayest be the living child, dear and precious with the Lord thy Father.

But there is one thing yet sticks with me, and makes me afraid that I am yet dead in my sins and trespasses, and that I am not made partaker of this spiritual life, and that is this; I am alive to the world: can a man live unto God and to the world too? when I go into the world and upon my worldly occasions, then I am very lively; but when I come to duty, then I am dead, and my heart dead, and therefore I am afraid that I am not alive to God, and made partaker of this spiritual life.

I answer, This, if true, is very ill: for I find in that xiiith of Matthew, the parable of the seed, that there are three false grounds, unto one true ground; three unsound hearts to one sound, that live under the gospel and the preaching of the word; and that ground that goes the furthest and yet falls short of the truth, is the ground that received the word; the thorny ground, and the thorns choked it: it is the worldly professor. Three to one false; and the worldly professor goes the furthest, such a one as is choked in duty with the world.

But yet notwithstanding, let me tell ye this: Every man is not alive to the world, or a worldly man, that does use the things of the world, or that is active, and cheerful in the way of his calling: for the things of the world, they are the materials of our grace, that our grace works upon while we are here below.

Yea, let me tell you further, and I pray observe it warily,

Possibly a man may see a greater beauty in the things of the world, after conversion, than ever he saw before. As now, in the case of the law. While a man is in the state of nature, then he is under the law; but when a man is converted and drawn to Christ, then he is free from the law: and then when he is freed from the law, he sees a greater excellency in the law, than ever he saw before conversion; for then says he, Now I see that the commandment is holy, just and good. Indeed, as to the point of justification, he sees a greater emptiness in the law than ever he did before; but as to the point of rule of life, he sees a greater beauty in the law than ever he did before. So Paul did, as ye read in the viith of the Romans. So in this case: though as to the point of satisfaction, a man after he is converted sees less in the creature than ever he did before; yet as to the point of Christ's purchase, looking upon the creature as the purchase of Jesus Christ, Christ hath purchased these for me, he sees a greater beauty in them now than ever before; for, says he, Christ hath purchased these, and all these are mine in Christ, and Christ hath paid for me; Christ is mine, and I am Christ's, and these are mine, and all is Christ's. Though as to the matter of satisfaction, his soul cannot be satisfied, he sees less in the world than ever he did before; yet as to the matter of Christ's purchase, a man after his conversion may see a greater beauty in the things of the world than ever he did before.

Only here, I remember the story of Anselmo: walking abroad in the fields, he saw a shepherd's boy that had taken a bird, and having tied a stone unto the leg of the bird, the bird offered to fly and mount up, but still the stone at her heel pulled the bird back again; whereupon Anselmo falls a weeping: Thus, saith he within himself, it is with men, they sometimes offer to mount up to God in good purpose, but then they have some earthly business at their heel, and that makes them fall down again; they purpose and purpose, and offer and offer to mount up to God, but there is a stone at the heel, some earthly business at the heel, and so they fall down to the earth again. So if it be with you now, if you have a stone at your heel, a calling at your heel, an employment at your heel, an earthly business at your heel; yet every day you are mourning and lamenting over it, and

saying, Oh! what a clog have I at my heel, what a stone have I at my heel! Oh, Lord, when shall I come to heaven, that I may be freed from this clog at my heel? I say, if you mourn and lament over this clog that you have at your heel, it rather argues that you are alive than dead; and therefore take in all the comfort that hath been spoken concerning this truth: the saints and people of God, are in a most comfortable state upon this account.

But you will say unto me, Is there nothing in this doctrine but comfort? Is there no duty that this doctrine calls for at our hands? Suppose now that I be alive, spiritually alive; that indeed I am not the painted child, but I am the living child of God, and made partaker of this spiritual life; what is my duty now that does flow from hence?

I answer, Surely you will be thankful for your life. If your outward and momentary life were given you for a prey, you would be thankful: and will ye not be thankful for this life, this spiritual life, this pleasant life, this eternal life, that never shall be taken from you?

But there are three things I will propound to you in particular.

1. If we be alive indeed, and made partakers of this spiritual life, why then should we not live at an higher rate than the world do, which have none of this life? The beast lives at an higher rate than the plant or the herb does; why? because it hath an higher life than the plant or herb hath. Man, as man, lives at an higher rate than the beast does; why? because man, as man, hath an higher life than the beast hath. And if a man have this spiritual life, he hath a life that is higher than the men of the world's life is: and therefore, if we be alive, and made partaker of this spiritual life, why should we not live at an higher rate? why should I not say to my own soul thus, and speak it often, Oh, my soul, wherein dost thou live at an higher rate than civil men do? thou hast a higher life, thou sayest, why dost thou not then live at an higher rate?

2. If we be alive indeed, and made partakers of this spiritual life, why should our hearts run after the things of the world, so as to feed on them as our meat, to be satisfied with them? Every life lives upon some meat that maintains it, and is suitable to it. The herb hath one kind of life, and it

hath a meat that suits to it. The beasts have another life, and they have a meat that does suit to that life. Man hath another life, different from the beast, and therefore he hath a meat that doth suit to his life. Now this spiritual life, it is another kind of life than the natural life of man is, and therefore it must have a meat that does suit with it, meat that the world knows not of. Says our Saviour, "I have meat to eat that you know not of," John iv. 32. This life of grace, it is a hidden life; and therefore the meat thereof that it lives upon, it is an hidden meat. Then, if you are alive indeed, and have this spiritual life, why do you live upon these outward things, and why should our hearts run out after these outward things, so as to live upon them, and make them, as it were, our meat, for the satisfaction of our souls, to live upon?

3. If we be alive indeed, and made partakers of this spiritual life, why is our communion and fellowship together no more living? Why no more living fellowship and communion? Why is our conference no more warm and living? A living coal warms, ye know. There is this difference between a living coal and a dead coal: take a dead coal, and though it be never so great or small, it sullies and blacks, more or less, but it warms not. But take your living coal, which hath fire in it, and though it be never so great or small it does warm in proportion, more or less it warms. And if we be as living coals, why then is our conference and communion together no more warming? When ye go into wicked and ungodly company, there ye meet with dead coals, and there ye are sullied and dirtied and blacked by them. I say, If ye indeed be living coals, why is your conference no more warm and living? Oh, what sad times are we now fallen into. Heretofore, some four or six or ten years ago, ye should not come into a christian's company, but you should have some heart-warming conference, that you should bless God for many years after. As it is said of Junius, he came into a poor countryman's house, and he spake so feelingly of Christ, that he thought it was not knowledge only that would serve a man's turn, and thereupon he thought of his own condition, and was turned to God. And we read of the martyrs in the primitive times, when they met together, they would speak much of the kingdom, the kingdom, the

kingdom of heaven; insomuch, as their accusers, their enemies, and persecutors, charged them, that they aimed at the empire and the kingdom; whereas they were speaking of a heavenly kingdom, and not of an earthly kingdom. But, I say, they were always speaking of the kingdom, the kingdom. And so heretofore, in former times, when christians did meet together, then they would speak of the kingdom, and something that would warm their hearts together, that they might be the better all the year after. But now, when we are met together, either our speech is about news, or some dispute in point of religion, or some other thing; yea, though it be upon the Lord's day. But if you be living coals, where is your living conference, and your heart-warming communion? Certainly, if you be alive in Christ indeed, and made partaker of this spiritual life, you will live at a higher rate than the men of the world do.

Is there nothing in all this doctrine, concerning those that are dead in sins, and not made alive; hath this doctrine nothing to say to them?

Yes, it hath very much to say to them, only I am loth to be the messenger of death to any one of your souls? But, if this doctrine be true, that every godly man is a living man, and in the state of life, and none else: How many poor dead souls may this doctrine find in congregations! It is said, that when the Egyptians found their first-born dead in their families, there was a great cry through Egypt, a great cry in every family. And were men as sensible of their souls as they are of their bodies, oh, what a great cry might there be in divers of your families! One crying out, and saying, Oh, Lord, I have a dead child, whose soul is dead: another, Oh, Lord, I have a dead servant in my family: another, Oh, Lord, I have a dead wife in my family, whose soul is dead: another, I have a dead husband, a dead friend. I say, were men and women as sensible of their souls as they are of their bodies, what crying, what a great cry this morning might there be found in this congregation! But I choose rather to exhort ye in the name of the Lord, for to get this same spiritual life that now I have been speaking of; above all getting to get this spiritual life. Ye see into what sad times you are fallen. Who knows how long he shall live? Who knows how long he shall be the owner of his estate, liberty, or life?

The kingdom is full of blood; and there is a blood-thirsty disposition that runs through the kingdom: and if you and I have our lives taken from us, and we have not a better life, what a sad condition shall we be in. Wherefore I beseech ye in the Lord, labour to get another life, this spiritual life, that shall never be taken from you; and the Lord give you hearts to do it.

But you will say, How should that be done?

I answer, Come unto Jesus Christ: whatever thou beest, man or woman, now come unto Jesus Christ. Says the Lord Christ, "They will not come unto me that they may have life," John v. 40. There are three things that keep men from coming to Christ: one thing is, men's negligence; men think they can repent afterward, and they may have Christ afterward, and so for the present they neglect coming to Jesus Christ. Sometimes, nay always, unbelief keeps men off from coming to Jesus Christ. For as faith brings Christ and the soul together, so unbelief keeps a man from coming to Jesus Christ. And another thing is, unwillingness to part with all for Jesus Christ. The young man ye have read of in the gospel, went away sorrowful when Christ said to him, Go and sell all, to come to Christ: so he did not come to Christ upon that account. And so, when we come to men and women, and say, You must come to Christ, and leave all your former company; Nay, say they, I can have Christ better cheap, upon better terms; and I cannot leave my company, and my merry meetings: and so they come not to Christ. But I beseech you in the Lord, come unto Jesus Christ; oh, whatever thou hast been, come unto Jesus Christ that you may have life.

I know many will say, I have been long dead in my trespasses and sins, and I fear there is no hope of life for me.

Now mark what I say to that, and so I will end all. There are three mentioned in the gospel whom Christ raised from the dead. One a maid that lay in her father's house, and Christ came in and took her by the hand, and said unto her, Arise. Another was a young man, that was carried out of his father's house, and was laid out upon the hearse; and Christ came, and said unto him, Arise. And the third was Lazarus, that had been four days dead, and stank again; and Christ speaks to Lazarus, and he comes forth. And these

three, says Austin, shows those that Christ will raise up from the dead again. The first, the maid that lay in her father's house, notes that sort of sinners that commit secret sins, and never come abroad, never come into act. The second, the son that was carried out of his father's house, and laid upon the hearse, notes that sort of sinners that sin openly; swearers and drunkards, whose sins are abroad. And the third, that of Lazarus, notes that sort of sinner that hath lien so long in the grave that he even smells again. Now I pray further observe this, that when Christ came to raise Lazarus, then Christ prayed, but he did not pray when he raised the other two; and he groaned over him; he did not groan over the maid, nor over the young man, but he groaned over Lazarus, to shew the difficulty of raising a poor sinner from the dead that hath lien long in his sin. And therefore, if there be ever a poor soul here that is dead in his sins; oh, go to Christ while thou art young, and fall down before him and say, Oh, Lord, I have a dead heart of mine own, oh, let me have life from thee. But whether thou be young or old, here is yet hope; Lazarus raised as well as the young maid, and young man; Lazarus, that lay, till he stank again in the grave; and therefore, yet there is hope though thou hast lien long. Wherefore in the name of the Lord, I beseech you all, come unto Jesus Christ this morning, If there be ever a poor dead soul in this congregation, as may be some there is, some drunkard crept in, some swearer, some unclean wanton: well, if there be ever a dead soul in this congregation, now go to Christ that thou mayest have life: and I say to thee, Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead and the Lord Jesus give us life.

SERMON II.

"Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

GAL. II. 20.

YE heard the last day, that two things especially, are observable from these words:

First. That every godly, gracious man, is a living man,

is in the state of life, lives a spiritual life. And this I have spoken to.

Secondly. That our justification by faith alone, is no enemy, but a real friend unto this our spiritual life.

Nevertheless, ζωδε and now I live; but now I live. As if he should say, I never did live before; but now, being justified by faith alone, and having the experience of this great truth, now I live. At the 16th verse, he had said, "That a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ;" whereupon it was, or might be objected: if a man be not justified by the works of the law, then is he free from the law, then he is dead unto the law, then a man may live as he lists? Nay, not so, says the apostle at the the 19th verse, "For I through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live to God:" quite contrary, "That I might live to God, I am dead to the law." Yea, "and though I am crucified with Christ, yet now I live," and I never did live till now; but now I live: this very principle of justification by faith alone, is the fountain and original of all my spiritual life. And thus indeed you shall find: for if you look into those three epistles of Paul to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Hebrews; ye shall find that the apostle does give this as the rise unto all his exhortations unto holiness of life: in the latter end of the epistle to the Romans, the apostle does exhort unto holy practices, and to a godly conversation: but in the beginning, he does state, and prove this doctrine, of justification by faith alone. So in this epistle to the Galatians; so in the epistle to the Hebrews: as if the only rise of all our holiness, and godly conversation were this, our free-justification through the blood of Christ, by faith alone.

For the opening, and clearing of this great truth; I shall spend a little time in the explication of the terms.

First. Justification by faith alone.

Secondly. I shall labour to demonstrate this truth unto you, that justification by faith alone, is the fountain and original of all our holiness and spiritual life.

Thirdly. Answer to some objections.

Fourthly. Labour to shew ye, what there is in this free justification by faith alone, that may, can, or doth advance our holiness.

First. What is meant by this justification by faith alone? I answer, that I may be understood by the meanest. By this justification I mean, That act of God's grace, whereby through the imputations of our sins to Christ, and Christ's righteousness unto us, God the Father doth pronounce us righteous in his sight. This is justification. And this is done by the righteousness, and the blood of Christ only, as the material and meritorious cause, it is done only by faith as the instrumental cause, so we are said to be justified by faith alone. Yet not so, as that a man is justified by faith which hath no works; for all justifying faith is full of works: but these works do not come into our justification: as now, a man's servants, they have him to bed. Servants have their master and mistress to bed; tend upon them to bed; but they do not go into the bed with them: they are with them again in the morning, they bring them water and necessary things, but they do not come to bed to them. Now, says, Luther, justification is that bed, where Christ and a believing soul lies: and though good works, duties, and prayers tend upon Christ, and wherever there is faith, there are these; yet this bed of justification is kept free, and entire, and only for the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and they come not to bed, they come not into this work. Or if you will thus: ye know, that when an Israelite was stung in the wilderness, by a fiery biting serpent, he was then to look upon the brazen serpent; and by the beholding of the brazen serpent he was cured; the looking of his eyes cured him. He had other members, there were the arms, and the legs, and other members that did accompany the eyes; but though there were other members that did accompany the eyes, it was the seeing of the eyes that did cure the person. And so, though works do accompany faith; and there is no saving justifying faith, but works accompany it; yet it is only the beholding of this brazen serpent by the eye of faith, that does cure the soul as to the point of justification. When Abraham went up into the mountain to offer up his son, he spake to his servants to stay below, "Stay you here till I come again, at the foot and bottom of this hill," Gen. xxii. 5: and so they did. Servants he had, but they stayed below. And so when a man goes up into this hill of justification, this high mountain, he takes only his faith with him,

and he says unto all his works, and unto all his duties, stay you below at the bottom of the hill; and there they attend. So that faith, justifying faith, though it hath always works, yet they come not into this matter of of justification. It is faith alone that justifies. This by way of explication.

Secondly. But you will say, How may it appear now, that this free-justification of a poor sinner by faith alone, is the original of all our holiness and spiritual life?

Thus, it appears by contraries: contraries, have contrary consequences. If the law, and justification thereby, be no friend, but a real enemy unto all our grace and holiness, then justification by faith alone is a friend to it: but now take the law, and you shall find that justification thereby, is no friend, but a real enemy unto all our holiness, and the power of godliness. What greater enemies had the world ever to the power of godliness, than the Jews were? and they sought to establish their own righteousness, and to be justified by the law. And now-a-days, what more bitter and more fell enemy unto the power of godliness, than a moral, civil man? Why? Because though he do not understand himself, yet he doth secretly seek his acceptance with God, by his own doing, and good meaning. A man can never live to God, that lives to himself: so long as a man seeks justification by his own doing and working, he lives in himself. Therefore says the apostle, "I desire not to be found in mine own righteousness," Phil. iii. 9: to be found in it. Hope is the spring of action. The ploughman ploughs in hope, and he sows in hope; hope is the spring of action. Now if a man seeks to be justified by the law, or the works of the law, there is no hope; for all works are imperfect: and if no hope, says the soul, why should I work? as good never a whit, as never the better. That cannot be the principle of our grace and holiness, which can neither convert a man, nor mortify his sins, nor quicken one to what is good, nor comfort, or free him from temptation. Now I pray, what is it that converts a soul to Christ? is it the law, or the preaching of the law? Nay, says our Saviour, "I will send the Comforter, and he shall convince the world of sin," John xvii. 9. But where do I receive the Spirit? Says the apostle in the next chapter, the iiird of the Galatians, "O ye foolish Galatians this would I know of ye, Received ye the Spirit by

the preaching of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Not by the preaching of the law. And as for mortification of sin: can the law do that? Nay, says the apostle in the viiith of the Romans, "The law is weak: what the law could not do, being weak, God sent his own Son, to condemn sin in the flesh." So that the law cannot mortify sin, the law cannot do it. And as for our quickening unto what is good; can the law do that? Nay, says the apostle, "The law is a dead letter; and the law is the ministration of death;" and can that which is a dead letter, and the ministration of death, quicken us unto what is good? certainly it cannot. And as for our temptations, and freedom from them; does the law do that? Ye know the apostle triumphs, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" And who shall lay any thing to my charge? shall the anger, and wrath of God? shall Satan, or mine own conscience? I will not be much afflicted, says he: why? for it is God that justifies. He does not say, for it is Moses that justifies: but it is Christ that died, and God justifies, not Moses. Samson, ye know, found an honey-comb in the body of a dead lion; not in hives at home, or trees abroad; but he found an honey-comb in the body of the dead lion. So does a poor tempted soul find all the honey-combs of comfort, in the body of the dead Lion of the tribe of Judah, not in his own hive. I have read of a certain man that was much in prayer, fasting and reading; and the devil came unto him and told him, Friend, why dost thou pray so much, and read so much, and fast so much? it is all to no purpose, for thou shalt go to hell at the last, thou shalt never go to heaven: says he, As for that, I leave that to God; it is not my question, whether I shall go to heaven, or hell: but my question is, how shall I serve God, and live to God? Had he now sought justification in a way of works, and by the law; he could have ever been able to have answered to this temptation? Ye may see what the apostle says in the viith chapter of his epistle to the Romans; he gives you a similitude thus: as a woman; so is the soul of every man: so long as a woman is married unto one man, she brings forth children unto him, and not unto any other, but is dead unto all others: but when that man dies, she is free to marry; and she marries another, and she brings forth children unto him. Now says the apostle, at the 4th verse,

" wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him, who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." So that, so long as a man is married to the law, he can never bring forth fruit unto God. Now then, thus lies the reason: if that the law, and justification thereby, be no friend but a real enemy unto all our holiness: then contraries having contrary consequences, justification by faith alone, is a friend, and no enemy unto our spiritual life and holiness.

This also will appear, if ye consider the parallel between the first and second Adam. Christ is our second Adam. Now, says the apostle, in the vth of the Romans, " As by the sin of one, death came upon all men to condemnation: so by the righteousness of one, life comes unto many." Well, but how came condemnation upon all men by the sin of one? The first Adam, he was a common person, he did stand for all mankind; when he sinned, all mankind sinned: and therefore as soon as any one is born, the sin of Adam being imputed to him judicially; that imputation is the original of all the unholiness that is among the children of men. So our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being our second Adam, he is a common person, stands in the room of all the elect; he was obedient, not for himself, but for them: *Christus non meruit sibi.* Obeyed not for himself: and he died not for himself, but for them, righteous for them. When therefore, a man is born into the other world, is regenerate by faith? then all that righteousness of Christ, the second Adam, is imputed to him.

And this imputation of his righteousness by faith, is the original of all that holiness that is in our lives, thus: as all the unholiness, and wickedness that is in the world, does flow from the imputation of the first Adam's sin: so all that grace and holiness that is in the world, does flow from the imputation of the second Adam's righteousness. Now by faith alone, this righteousness is imputed, and does become ours, and therefore, justification by faith alone, is the principle and original of all our grace and holiness.

If free remission of sin, and the sense thereof, be the cause of our holiness: then justification by faith alone must needs be a friend unto it. For these two, free remission of

sin, and justification by faith alone, go together, and are ordinarily taken for one. And therefore in the iiird of the Romans, the apostle having said at the 24th verse, "Being justified freely by his grace;" he says at the 28th verse, "That a man is justified by faith:" and saying that a man is justified by faith, he says, That a man is justified freely by grace; these are put together. Now free remission of sin, and the sense thereof is the cause of all our holiness. Ye know what the apostle says, "The grace of God hath appeared unto all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live righteously and soberly in this present world," Titus ii. 11, 12. All holiness comes from thence, the apparition of grace, free remission of sin. And ye know what it is that doth hatch the chicken; it is not the fire that doth hatch the chicken, nor is it the cold water that does hatch the chicken; but laying of the eggs under the warm feathers of the living hen. Come to a man or woman that hath many eggs, that are yet not chickens, within a month or two, these are all become living chickens: say you, how comes it to pass, that all these are now living chickens? What! did you lay these eggs unto the fire? No, for then they would have been roasted. What, did you lay these eggs in the cold water? No, then they would have rotted; but I laid them under the warm wings of the living hen, and so they are become chickens. So you come to a living soul, a living heart, and you say, Friend, how came you to be thus enlivened, and quickened? a month or two ago, I heard you complaining of your dead heart, Oh, my heart is dead: but how came you to be thus enlivened, and to be thus quickened? Did you go and lay your heart against the fire of the law? No, that would have scorched me, and tormented me. What, did you go and lay your heart in the cold world? No, that would have rotted me. How then? Truly, after all my fears, and after all my doubtings, I went and laid my cold heart under the warm wings of divine love, and so it came to pass that I am thus enlivened, and I am thus quickened, as you see this day, for the which I bless the Lord for ever. Three things there are that do make up a gracious conversation: repentance for sin past; mortification of sin present; and the obedience of faith, or obedience.

Now as for repentance: look, I pray, at what is said in the

viith chapter of Luke, and see what is the cause of that: you read there a story of a great sinner, that became a great penitent, at the 37th verse, " Behold a woman in the city which was a great sinner; and she came and stood behind Jesus (at the 38th verse) weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head." " She wept much;" why? " for " says the text at the latter end of the chapter, " she loved much." But why did she love much? She loved much, because much was forgiven her. So, then, remission is the cause of repentance. And have ye not so much expressly in that xvith chapter of Ezekiel, and the last verse: " I will establish my covenant with thee, that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done." So that this shame and repentance comes from pacification. And as for this matter, Luther had so great a sight into it, that, says he, Before I was justified by faith alone, and saw into this matter of free remission, I looked upon that word, repent, as a terrible word, I did even hate that word, and I wished that there had been no such word in all the book of God; but after once that word, *justicia*, was opened, the righteousness of faith; and after once I understood this doctrine of free remission, and justification by faith alone, then I loved repentance.

As for the mortification of sin: ye know what the apostle says, " Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, or have dominion over you:" why? " for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 12, 14. So, then, it is being under grace that does mortify sin.

And as for the matter of obedience: ye know what the Psalmist says, " There is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou mayest be feared," Psalm cxxx. 4. That is, that thou mayest be served, that thou mayest be obeyed. So that obedience, also, comes from the sight of mercy and of free remission.

Now, if free remission, and the sense thereof, be the cause of our holiness; then, surely, justification by faith alone can be no enemy, but must needs be a real friend unto all our spiritual life.

Thirdly. But by way of objection, it will be said, this doctrine of free remission and justification by faith alone, seems to

carry somewhat with it that is opposite unto grace and holiness; for the more a man is bound unto the law, and takes himself to be so, the more obedient he will be to the law: but now, a man never takes himself more to be bound under the law, than when he seeks to be justified by the works of the law, and so he will be most obedient.

For answer, ye must know that the word law, in the New Testament, is taken two ways: either it is taken for the covenant of works, thus; If you keep the ten commandments perfectly, you will live for ever: this is the covenant of works: sometimes the law is taken for the ten commandments, the rule of man's life. In the first sense a christian is dead unto the law, and is freed from it; but in the second sense, a believer, a justified person, is more bound to the law, to observe it as a rule of life, than ever he was. Only, you must know, there is a twofold bond; there is the bond of love, and there is the bond of fear; as there is the law of love, and the law of fear. Love, and the bond of love, is stronger than fear and the bond of fear; for fear is servant to love, fear is the handmaid of love; for ye never fear the losing of any good thing but what ye first love. Fear is the servant to love, and therefore love is stronger than fear, and the bond of love stronger than the bond of fear. Now, though a justified person be not bound unto the law, with the bond of a servile fear, yet he is bound unto the law with the bond of love; and so he is more obedient, as the bond of love is stronger than the bond of fear. A man must needs be obedient unto Christ, that takes himself to be none of his own, but Christ's. Therefore says the apostle, "Glorify Christ with your body, because ye are bought with a price, and because ye are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 20. So long as a man seeks to be justified by works, and by the law, so long he looks upon himself as his own; but when a man sees that he is justified by faith alone, then he looks upon himself as Christ's; that he is not his own: and so he is more obedient unto Christ than ever he was before.

If this be such a principle of grace and holiness, how comes it to pass that men sin the more, as they hear more of this free remission, and justification of a poor sinner by faith alone? Oh, says one, God is merciful and gracious, and therefore I will now live as I list, and repent afterwards. If

this doctrine, this truth, and this grace of God, be the principle of all our holiness; how comes it to pass that men sin more hereby?

I answer, pray how comes it to pass, if that water doth cleanse, that it doth not cleanse the blackamoor? and if fire doth warm, how comes it to pass that it doth not put heat into the dead man? and if the sun do enlighten, how comes it to pass it doth not enlighten those that are blind? I may ask you the reason, likewise; but I will tell you the reason, the reason of this is, because men are contrary unto God; and all that doth make this use and application of the Lord's mercy and grace, they are contrary unto God, for God works good out of evil: now a wicked man being contrary unto God, he works evil out of good. God works the greatest good, grace, out of the greatest evil, sin: a wicked man, he works the greatest evil, sin, out of the greatest good, God's love and grace. Why? Because he is contrary to God. But, now, take this truth and this grace of God, as it is in itself, and so it is a very real friend unto all our grace and holiness.

Fourthly. You will say, then, What is there in this justification by faith alone, or free remission, that does advance our holiness? How comes it to pass? What is there in this, that hath such an influence upon our lives, to make us the more holy, the more heavenly?

1. The more a man does forsake any good thing of his own for Christ, the more Christ is engaged to give a man his good things. There is no losing in losing for Jesus Christ. What ye lose for Christ, ye shall gain by Christ: and the greater and sweeter any blessing is that ye lose for Christ, the greater blessing will Christ give unto ye in the room thereof. Now what nearer thing is there to a man than his own righteousness? In justification by faith alone, a man lays down all his own righteousness at the feet of Jesus Christ, and therefore Christ is engaged to give him a better righteousness, the righteousness of God.

2. God does never cause any man to pass under any relation, but he does write the law of that relation upon his heart. For example, If the Lord does cause a man to pass under the relation of a magistrate, God will write the law of that relation upon him, and give him ability to it. If God does cause

a man to pass under the relation of a minister, God will write the law of that relation on him. If God does cause a man to pass under the relation of a husband, or a father, God will cause the law of that relation to be written upon his heart. Now when a man is justified by faith alone, then he becomes the son of God: "To as many as receive him, he gives power to be called the sons of God; even to as many as believe on his name," John i. 12. I say, when a man is justified by faith alone, he becomes the son of God, he passes under that relation; therefore then does the Lord write the law of that relation of a son upon his heart, and thereby he is made more son-like by his obedience.

3. The more a man does agree with God and the law, the more fit he is to walk with God and observe the law. When a man is justified by faith, then he is agreed with God: "Can two walk together, unless they be agreed?" Amos iii. 3. Now when a man is justified by faith, he is reconciled to God; reconciled to the justice of God, reconciled to the anger of God, reconciled to the law of God, the law is his friend. Now before a man was justified, the anger of God was his enemy, and the justice of God his enemy, and the law his enemy; but now, being justified, he is reconciled to God: reconciled to his anger, that is satisfied by Christ; reconciled to the law, that is satisfied by Christ: thus he is made a friend to God, he is agreed with God, and with the law, and so he can walk with God, and so he is the more obedient.

4. But especially thus: As by works, and seeking justification by works, a man is estated in the covenant of works; so by faith, and seeking justification by faith alone, a man is estated in the covenant of grace. When a man is estated in the covenant of grace, God is engaged to give grace unto him, to make him holy. For that, I pray, do but read what we have in that xxxvith chapter of Ezekiel, at the 25th verse, and so downwards: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart, also, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." First, I pray, mark here, that the

Lord does promise remission of sin, although it be never so great: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and wash ye from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." But, says a poor doubting soul, though the Lord do thus wash, I am so foul, and so unclean, that I am afraid I shall never be cleansed. Yes, says the Lord, I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. But though I be clean, and cleansed from my guilt, and my sin pardoned; yet, notwithstanding, I have such a naughty, filthy heart, as I shall foul myself again. See what follows: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Oh, but my heart is so hard, like a stone, that I shall resist this mercy of God. Nay, says he, "And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh:" I will take away the resistance, the stony heart out of your flesh. But though it be so, as long as my nature is unchanged I shall never do that which is right. Says God, I will change your nature for you; "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." I will make such a change in you, that whereas before, naturally, ye were as hard as a stone, now I will make you as soft as flesh. But though the Lord doth thus change my nature, yet, notwithstanding, I shall never be able to order my conversation aright, I shall never be obedient. Mark what follows: "I will put my Spirit within you, and I will cause you to walk in my statutes:" I will make you obedient, says God. Oh, what streams of mercy are here! But, I pray, mind the fountain whence these flow; they all flow from this fountain of free remission. The first is, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and cleanse you from all your idols;" I will forgive you freely. Aye, but though this be set first, it may be this is not the cause of the rest; how shall it appear that this free remission is the cause of all our holiness? Then, I pray, look into the viiith chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, where this covenant of grace is repeated, at the 10th verse: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Why? "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their

sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." So that remission is the cause of sanctification: I will thus and thus sanctify, says the Lord; "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more:" this is the cause of all that. Now, I say, when a man is once estated in this covenant of grace, the Lord, ye see, is engaged then to make him holy. And as by works, and seeking justification by works, a man is estated in the covenant of works; so by faith, and seeking justification by faith alone, a man is estated in the covenant of grace; and so the Lord is engaged for to make him holy. So that thus you see, now, this free grace of God, justification of a poor sinner by faith alone, it is no enemy, but a real friend unto all our holiness and spiritual life. No wonder, therefore, that the apostle says, "And now I live."

By way of application. If these things be so, then here we see the reason why men are no more gracious, no more heavenly, no more holy, no more spiritual in their lives; because they think not of this, they study not this, they never had the true sense of this: even because they do not stand clear from their own duties, and their own doings, as to the great matter of justification and acceptance with God. Is the free remission of sin, and justification by faith alone, the fountain and original of all our holiness? Then why stand ye gazing upon your own duties? upon your own prayers and mournings? Would ye live? I know you would: "Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life," Job ii. 4. But, would you live spiritually? would you live an eternal life, that life that never dies, that communicative life, that life that is better than you should have had in the state of innocency? Then do you stand clear from all your own doings and duties and workings, as to this great matter of your acceptance with God the Father. Do ye think that Jesus Christ will present a duty or a service unto God the Father, that steps into his room and place and office? What is the place and room of Christ? He is our Saviour, and the Mediator between God and man, that stands between God and man, for to cause acceptance with God the Father. If then you pray, hear, read, mourn, and think by all these to fetch in your acceptance with God the Father; do you not bring your duty into the room of Christ,

and into the place of Christ? And do ye think that the Lord Jesus Christ will ever present such a duty unto God the Father, as steps into his room and place? What a sad thing is it, for a man to draw his own works or his own doings into his acceptance or justification: for a man to turn aside to the covenant of works!

You will say, But when may a man be said for to draw his own works or duties into his acceptance with God the Father? Or, when may a man be said to turn aside to the covenant of works?

Even godly men do it too much. Abraham, though the father of the faithful, went in to Hagar, the type of the law. And so now the children of Abraham, believers, do too much go in to Hagar still, and to the law still. When a man cannot, dares not rely upon Jesus Christ, until he first sees his own duty, and his own prayer, and enlargement in duty; then he does this too much. When a man does measure all his acceptance with God the Father, by his own performance —If I be enlarged, then I am accepted; if I am straitened, now I am not accepted—then he does this too much. When a man will not come to Christ, until his heart be first quickened and warmed by some particular word; then he does this too much. But oh! you, you that are godly, labour I beseech ye in Christ, to stand clear from your own duties and doings. The more distinct knowledge ye have in this truth, and the more ye walk in the sense of it, the more spiritual and holy ye will be.

But, will some say, that I may take off some scruples and answer some cases of conscience; If these things be so, then do I fear that my obedience was never right, for truly I have even turned aside to a covenant of works, the Lord knows I have. I remember the time when I had legal breakings, and all my obedience hath flowed from thence. Is free remission, and justification by faith alone, the fountain and spring-head of all our obedience and holiness? then seeing that legal breakings have been the spring-head of all my obedience, then do I fear my obedience was never right. Oh! I fear that I have been wrong all this while, that I have been but an hypocrite all this while, and have deceived myself, and been under the law all this while.

Stay a little, you read in Scripture concerning Jacob and

Esau: it is said, "That the elder shall serve the younger," Gen. xxv. 23. That is, says Luther, in a spiritual way: the elder, the law, shall serve the younger the gospel: and the elder sin shall serve the younger grace. Now, have your former legal-breakings, made you more for to prize grace, and to prize Christ, and to prize free remission, and justification by faith alone? Here then, the elder does serve the younger. And what though legal-breakings were first, and were the elder in your heart, yet so long as the elder does serve the younger, thou hast no reason to be discouraged in this respect.

I fear that my obedience and my holiness is not right; because it so little, and so scant: free remission the fountain of all our holiness, that is a full fountain: and if my holiness were a stream from that fountain, it would be more full and more abundant: the Jews they knew little of this truth, justification by faith alone, and yet they were holy; David holy, and Moses holy, and Josiah holy: is this the fountain of all our grace, and of all our holiness, free remission and justification by faith alone? Then the more discovery there is of this, the more holy we should be: but alas, I find my holiness and my obedience so scant, and little, that I am afraid it can never come from so full a fountain as this is.

Beloved, there is nothing little between God and a gracious soul. There is nothing small that comes from God to you, because it comes from an infinite God: there is nothing small that goes from a gracious soul unto God again, because it comes from an infinite desire of pleasing God. It is one thing to be more in the shell, and another thing to be more in the kernel. Luther professes, that when he was a monk, as it seems by his writings he was fifteen years in a cloister, says he, When I was a monk, I was a great deal more holy then, according to the outward appearance, than I am now; then I prayed, and then I fasted, and then I macerated my body, and then I went meanly; but now I eat, and I drink, and I clothe myself as others do; and yet now one little prayer is more accepted with God than all my fifteen years prayers before: why? because says he, then I prayed in a way of works, and sought justification in a way of works; but now I have had a taste of this justification by faith alone,

and a little from thence is more pleasing unto the Lord, than all the fifteen years before.

But whoever you are that make this objection, give me leave to propound these two questions to you.

1. Whereas you say, it is little, and therefore you fear it cannot come from so full a fountain: dost thou stint, or limit thyself in thy obedience, or in thy holiness? A man that seeks to be justified, and saved by his working, he does stint and limit himself: I have enough, says he, for to bring me to heaven, and what need I more? a great many are very precise, and strict, but, I praise the Lord, I have enough for to bring me to heaven, and what need I more? So he stints and limits himself, And I have been weeping, and mourning enough for to get forgiveness, and the Lord now hath forgiven me, and what need I more? Thus he stints, and limits himself, because he is under the law, and under a covenant of works.

2. Though your obedience as you think is very little and very small: do you oppose those that have much do you oppose those that have the power of godliness, and those that have more than yourself? A man that seeks justification by works, he does oppose those men that have more holiness than himself. See I pray, how it was with the Jews in that ixth of the Romans, and 31st verse: "But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling stone." They stumbled at Christ, they stumbled at christianity, they stumbled at the corner stone. And so now, moral and civil men, that seek acceptance, though they do not understand themselves, in a way of working; they oppose those that are more godly that have the power of godliness. But ye know, a spark of fire, though it be but a spark of fire, it will not oppose the flame; though it be not so great as the flame, yet it will not oppose the flame: it opposes the water, but it doth not oppose the flame of fire. And so if a man have grace, though it be but a spark of grace; yet notwithstanding, if it be in truth, it will not oppose a flame. But now civil and moral men, that walk in a way of works, and are under the law; oh, how do they oppose those that have the power of

godliness, that have more grace than themselves, that are in a flame for Christ, them they oppose! Is it so with you that make this objection? Oh no, I praise the Lord, your soul will say, if it speak in truth; though I have but little, the Lord knows I do not oppose them that have much: I rejoice rather in those that have more than myself, yea, I rejoice in those that have the power of godliness. And, Lord, thou knowest I do not stint and limit myself; oh, I can never be godly enough, and I can never repent enough, and I can never mourn for my sins enough. Well, be of good comfort, this may be no other stream, than what flows from this blessed fountain, free remission, and justification by faith alone.

But some will say, I fear that upon all this account, my obedience and my holiness is not right; for I do not find the visible characters of justification upon my sanctification. Justification by faith alone is the fountain of all our holiness: then if my obedience were right, it would taste of my justification and of free remission; if my holiness were right, it would savour of free remission: but I do not find any visible characters of justification upon my sanctification; I do not find that my sanctification does relish or savour of free remission, or justification by faith alone; and therefore I fear all is naught, my obedience hath been naught and wrong all this while.

For answer to this. Know ye not, beloved, that a man's justification may be hidden from sense, when sanctification is in truth? Know ye not, that the life of grace is a hidden life? not only hidden from the world, but hidden from one's own soul, many times.

But what are those visible characters of justification, which are engraven upon a man's sanctification, so that when a man does see them, he may say, Surely here is a sanctification, that is no other than that which flows from free remission, and justification by faith alone?

When a man does mourn for his sin because it is pardoned, does not this repentance savour of free remission? When a man does obey the Lord, because God hath pardoned and forgiven him; does not this sanctification then savour of his justification and of free remission?

When there is a meeting of all graces, and one good work

and duty and grace is reconciled to another in a man's life; is there not then a taste and a savour of justification and free remission? When the Lord does justify a poor sinner, then all the attributes of God are reconciled to one another; justice is reconciled to mercy, and mercy is reconciled to justice; and all these reconciled attributes of the Lord, do meet upon the soul of a justified person: and accordingly, there is a meeting of all graces in the soul, and all good works and graces they are reconciled to one another. That whereas before a man was justified, they were at odds, at a distance one from another, and were inimititious one to another; now they are not. Whereas before a man was justified, he could not rejoice in God, but it hindered his mourning for sin; and he could not mourn for sin, but it hindered his faith, and he could not believe: his believing hindered his repentance. But now, when a man is justified and reconciled to the Lord, then all those works, duties and graces are reconciled to one another. Why? Because the attributes of God are reconciled unto one another, and all the attributes of God, they meet upon the heart of a justified person, and so there are the characters of his justification upon his sanctification here. And I appeal to ye, whoever you are that labour under this scruple, Is it not thus with thy soul in truth, do not you find it thus, that now you look upon the very justice of the Lord as your friend, the justice and righteousness of the Lord as your friend? That now ye are reconciled, as it were, to those duties, that therefore you looked upon as your enemies? That now you rest upon the Lord Christ that you may be obedient; and your very resting upon Christ, makes you obedient; your very beholding of Christ changes you from glory to glory? as the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. iii. 18. If you would speak in truth from your soul, you would say thus: Lord, thus it is with me; now I am reconciled to that duty that before was an enemy to me, and now these works, duties and graces are reconciled: for now, the more I can rejoice in God, the more I can mourn for sin; and the more I believe, the more I can repent. Heretofore, the more I believed the less I repented; my believing was my security: but now I see these works and duties are friends to one another, that now, the more I repent, the more I believe; and the more I believe,

the more I repent; all these works are reconciled in me. And Lord, thou that knowest all things, knowest, that therefore I grieve for my sins, because thou hast pardoned them; and therefore I desire to obey thee, because thou hast forgiven me. Well then, here are the visible characters of thy justification upon thy sanctification. And therefore be of good comfort notwithstanding this objection.

Only let me tell thee this, It may be thou hast not stood enough at a distance from thy own doings and duties, as to the matter of thy acceptance with God. But, would you be more spiritual and holy in your lives? labour more and more to stand at a distance from all your duties and doings, as to the great matter of your acceptance with God the Father.

But you will say, Suppose that I have not stood clear from my own doings as to the matter of my justification or acceptance with God the Father; what shall I do, that now I may stand clear in this matter, that so this fountain of free remission and justification by faith alone, may be opened upon my soul, and my spiritual life thereby may be more enlarged and increased?

Some things by way of answer to this, and so I have done.

1. Be ye humbled in the sight and presence of the Lord, that you have walked in that way, that you have tied Jesus Christ unto your conditions, and that you have made use of Christ only to eke out your performance, as to the matter of your acceptance.

2. Study much the transactions of things between God the Father and Jesus Christ; and then you will find, that Jesus Christ had satisfied God the Father before ever you came into the world: and therefore your souls when you think of this will say, How therefore can my work or my duty any way bring in satisfaction or acceptance with God the Father. Study, I say, the transactions between God the Father and Jesus Christ.

3. Acquaint your soul much with the difference between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. In the covenant of works, a man's work is first accepted and then his person; but in the covenant of grace, a man's person is first accepted, and then his work, And when you understand this, then you will say, Aye, if this be true, that a

man's person is first accepted, and then his work, how can my work any way fetch me in acceptance with God the Father? O my soul, for ever stand clear in this great matter of my acceptance in my duties.

4. Whenever your duties, your works and your graces are highest, then, and then especially, use thy soul to be beyond them, and say thus: Though now, I bless the Lord, my heart is thus and thus enlarged, yet I do not count upon my acceptance by reason of this enlargement. Though, I bless the Lord, I have now prayer, that before had none, yet I do not count my acceptance with God the Father by this prayer. When, I say, thy duty is highest, use thy soul to be beyond it.

5. When your duty, grace and holiness is lowest, then know that now ye have an opportunity to stand clear from your own duties and working, as to the matter of your acceptance and justification by faith alone. If I have a friend in my house, that lives in my house with me, whom I would not have privy unto a work or business, I shall take the opportunity to do the work when that friend is out of doors. Now, say I, he is abroad; if he were at home he would be prying over my shoulder, and he would have a finger in the business, and he would see it; but now he is abroad, now I will take the time to do it. My brethren, your duties, prayer and humiliation, they are all friends to your justification; but when prayer is out, and duty is out and abroad, and out of sight, and not at home: now take your time to be clear in the matter of resting upon Christ alone, and say, Now my prayer is gone, and duties gone, and all out of sight, O Lord! now I have an opportunity to rest upon Christ alone: had my prayer been at home, and duties at home, they would have been peering and prying into this work, but now they are all out of sight, now I will rest upon Christ and his righteousness alone. This is certain, that this justification by faith alone, and free remission of a poor sinner, it is the great fountain and principle of all our grace and holiness; and therefore, if you would be more gracious and more holy, I beseech you in the name of Christ study it much, and walk in the sense of it. And what is the reason that many professors are no more holy and humble, but waspish and peevish and harsh, and of a rugged dispo-

sition? but because they have not studied the gospel more, and free remission, and justification by faith alone, and they have not the sense of this upon their hearts. Poor souls, you want the experience of this. You think, some of you, there is no such way to be holy and gracious, as to have legal breakings, to have the law pressed upon you; but I do here tell you in the name of the Lord, and I lie not, that justification by faith alone, and free remission, is the principle of all our obedience and all our holiness. And when Paul came to this, and the sense of this, "Now I live," says he: and so wilt thou say, poor soul, when thou comest to the sense of this truth: I was dead before, but now I live; indeed I was down, and my heart dead, when I hung upon my own duties, but now I live. Now therefore, as you desire to live, and live spiritually, the Lord give you hearts to live in the sense and experience of this great truth; justification and free remission by faith alone.

SERMON III.

"*Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*"
GAL. II. 20.

THE apostle Paul having spoken of our living to God in the former verse, of our spiritual life, in those words, "Yet now I live;" he proceeds unto the properties of this spiritual life, and those are three, First, It is a self-denying life: "Yet not I: I live, yet not I." Secondly, It is a Christ-advancing life: "But Christ liveth in me." Thirdly, It is the life of faith: "And the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God."

I begin with the first at this time, in those words, "Yet not I." The words hold forth a self-depression or self-annihilation. The words are spoken in the person of a believer. So that in all these I's; "I through the law," and "I am crucified," and "I live," Paul doth personate a believer, one that seeks justification by faith alone, according to the tenure of the gospel. And so the observation is this:

Every true believer that seeks justification by faith alone,

is an humble, self-denying person; denying himself in spiritual things.

The way of the gospel is a self-denying way. Though a believer, that seeks justification by faith alone, and not by the works of the law, does live a spiritual life, and so does act, move and work towards God; yet he cannot endure to write an I upon his own performance. "Yet not I." He will obey God, but he will not have an I to be written upon his obedience. He will pray to God, but he will not have an I to be written upon his performance. Yet not I: "I live, yet not I." Wherever the gospel comes in power, it does work this self-denying frame of soul and spirit. And thus it was with Paul, in regard of his own person, as ye read in the first of Corinthians, the xvth chapter, speaking with relation unto the other apostles, at the 10th verse, "I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." I laboured more abundantly than they all, *yet not I.* I have been a preacher of the gospel, and have been a means to convert many souls unto Jesus Christ; "yet not I, but the grace of God with me." I have comforted many afflicted souls; yet not I. I have been a means to plant many churches; yet not I, but the grace of God with me. He will not have his work defiled with self, or this *I* to be written upon what he doth. And so it is with every believer, more or less; this is the way, and this is the spirit of the gospel: where it comes in life, truth and power, thus it is.

For the clearing of this great truth unto you. First, I shall spend a little time in the explication, and shew ye what it is for a man to deny himself in spiritual things. Secondly, I shall labour to give you some demonstrations of the truth. Thirdly, Answer one objection. And, Fourthly, Shew ye what there is in the gospel, or the way of the gospel, that can work a man's heart to this frame.

First, If ye ask me, What is it for a man to deny himself in spiritual things?

I answer, Ye know that there is a threefold self mentioned by divines. A natural self; as a man's parts, wit, reason, will, affections and inclination, are called one's self. Then there is a sinful self; and so a man's corruption, lust, and sinful disposition is called one's self. And then there is a

religious self; and so a man's duties, graces, obedience, righteousness and holiness are called one's self. Now though a man is to deny all these, yet I am not at this time to speak of the common place of self-denial, this scripture does not lead me to it; but only of self-denial in spiritual things, denial of religious self. There is a great difference between a man's denying of his sinful and of his religious self. When a man does deny his sinful self for Christ, then he is wholly to leave and forsake his sin and that self. But when a man is to deny his religious self for Christ, he is not to leave and forsake his duty: only, in point of justification, he is to renounce all; and, in point of sanctification, he is to attribute the strength, the power, and the glory of all his graces and duties unto Jesus Christ, and to himself nothing: and when a man, in point of justification, does renounce all; and, in point of sanctification, does attribute the strength, the power, and the glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and unto himself nothing; then he denies himself in spiritual things.

For there is a twofold denial of one's self even in spiritual things. One that is opposed to self-seeking, and another that is opposed to self-advancing. When a man seeks himself, he makes himself his end: when a man does advance himself, he makes himself his end. Now though a man be to deny himself in opposition to all self-seeking, yet that is not the argument that lies here, it is not the argument of this scripture; but a man is called upon by this scripture, to deny himself in opposition to self-advancing: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

But yet again, that we may rightly understand things. Though every believer is to deny himself, in spiritual things, and so to depress himself; yet, notwithstanding, he is not to speak evil of the grace of God within him. For there are two things in every duty or service: there is something of God's, and something of a man's own; something of the Spirit of God, and something of a man's own. Now though a man may trample upon all his duties, and upon all his graces, as to the point of justification; yet as to the point of sanctification, he may not mis-call the graces of God in him, and his duties, saying, These are nothing but the fruits of hypocrisy: for then he should speak evil of the Spirit, whose works they are. A man tramples and treads upon the dirt,

but he will not trample upon money, upon gold and silver: why? because that is a precious metal, or hath the stamp or the image of the prince upon it. Now our own duties, our own righteousness and holiness, as to the matter of justification, they are nothing worth, and so we trample upon all; but as to the matter of sanctification, they have the image of Christ upon them, they are precious metal; and therefore for a man to say, This is hypocrisy, and all is nothing but hypocrisy; this is not self-denial: properly, self-denial in spiritual things is, as to the matter of justification, to renounce all; and as to the matter of sanctification, to attribute the strength, the power, and the glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and to one's self nothing: and when a man does attribute all the strength, the power, the glory of all to Jesus Christ, and to himself nothing; then he is said to deny himself in spiritual things. This by way of explication.

Secondly. But now, whereby may it appear that the gospel works this grace in the heart of man?

I. If the law, and the preaching of the law, cannot make a man to deny himself in spiritual things, then the gospel must do it; for this grace is to be obtained, and found somewhere, something must work. Now the law, and the preaching of the law, can never make a man to deny himself in spiritual things; but rather it will make a man to seek himself in spiritual things. For what is it to preach the law, but when I shall come from God, and tell ye, that if you do keep the ten commandments, and fail in nothing, ye shall be saved; but if ye fail in any one point, ye shall be damned, and lost for ever. This will not make a man to deny his own righteousness, but rather to seek himself his own salvation to avoid damnation, and seek himself, in spiritual things. But now, when I come to ye, and speak thus unto ye from the Lord, that if you do throw down all your own righteousness at the feet of Christ, and rest only upon him, ye shall be saved; this will make a man to deny all his own righteousness, and deny himself in spiritual things: and this is the gospel. And the gospel must needs do it. For what is the gospel, but the voice of Christ, the preachings and the sermons of Christ? Now look as it was with the first Adam; the first lesson that the first Adam did learn, practice and teach his posterity, was, to advance himself in spiritual

where the gospel comes in power in the heart of a believer, that seeks justification by faith alone?

For answer, I grant ye that the very heathen, papists and moral men, have spoken much, and written much, concerning humility and self-denial: and have seemed to go far in the practice of it. I have read of some papists, that have been so abstemious that they have gone up and down from one tavern to another, and from one feast to another; and when men have been eating and drinking liberally, they have sat down, abstaining from all meats and drinks, presenting themselves as patterns of self-denial in the point of appetite.

And indeed, we read of three degrees that the more moderate papists do make of self-denial and humility. The first degree, says Granatensis, and divers others, is, for a man to acknowledge, that all comes from God, and nothing from himself. The second degree of humility is, to acknowledge, that whatsoever a man hath from God, he hath it not from merit, but from grace, and mere mercy. The third degree of humility or self-denial is, for a man to be eagle-eyed, and quick-sighted, in beholding another man's excellency; but mole-eyed, and not seeing his own excellency. Even thus far the papists. So that I grant, men may seem to go very far therein. But I speak of self-denial in spiritual things: and do we read of moral, heathen men and the like; that do deny themselves, it may be in words, but, I say, in practice, that do deny or have denied themselves in spiritual things?

Take a moral, civil man; and though he may seem to be very humble, and deny himself; yet he is proud of his humility. Says one philosopher, when he came unto Plato's house, and saw his house lay very neat: I trample upon Plato's pride, says he: but Plato answered again, Not without your own pride. But now, take a believer, and he doth not only deny himself, but is sensible of his own pride, when he is most humble, in that very thing wherein he is humble.

Again, take a moral, civil man; and though he may seem to be very humble, and to deny himself; yet it is but in this or that particular thing: but now a believer denies himself in all. "I count ALL things but dung and dross, (says the apostle) for Christ," Phil. iii. 8.

Again, Take a moral, civil man; and though he seem to be very humble, and to deny himself; yet notwithstanding, it is but the artifice of his reason and his resolution. If I go on in such and such a way, says he, I shall be undone; and therefore I must deny myself of this company, and of this pleasure; and so by the strength of his reason and resolution, he does deny himself. But now, a believer, a christian, he denies himself in spiritual things, by the beholding of Jesus Christ.

Again, Take a moral, civil man, though he may seem to be humble, and deny himself; yet there is no mystery, no spiritual mystery in his self-denial: in gospel self-denial there is, the gospel does work mysteriously like itself, it is the great mystery. Take a christian, a believer, and I pray, do but observe a little, what a great mystery there is in all his humility and self-denial, wrought by the gospel. As thus:

He ever cries out, What shall I do to be saved, what shall I do to be saved? and yet he professes that he does not expect to be saved by doing. Here is a mystery.

Again, He counts himself less than the least of all God's mercies; and yet he thinks God hath done more for him, than if he had given him all the world. Here is a mystery.

Again, He prizes every duty and every gift and every grace, although it be never so small, prizes it above all the world; and yet he counts all but dung and dross in regard of Christ. Here is a mystery.

Again, He looks upon himself as the greatest sinner, and thinks of every one better than himself; and yet when he looks upon a drunkard, or a swearer, or the like, professes that he would not change his condition with him for all the world. He looks upon himself as the greatest sinner, and thinks of every one better than himself; and yet he says concerning such and such, he would not change his condition with them for all the world. What a mystery is this!

Again, He mourns under reproaches and the despisings of men, and yet he triumphs over them and is above them. Here is a mystery.

Again, He counts himself nothing, and all that ever he

does, nothing: and yet he praises the Lord for every little, and thinks that God hath done more for him, in giving him Christ, than if he had given him all the world. Here is a mystery.

Now, as for the seeming humility and self-denial that is in heathen or moral civil men, there is none of this mystery; but there is a spiritual mystery that runs along in the veins of all this gospel humility and self-denial.

But I speak of self-denial in spiritual things; and what moral, civil man, does deny himself in spiritual things? I remember one makes mention of a certain godly man, *Dies Lusitanus*, that was sorely tempted by Satan in his time. The man was much in duty, and Satan comes unto him and says, Why dost thou take thus much pains? thou dost fast and watch, but, O man, what is there that thou doest more than I do? Art thou no drunkard, or no adulterer? Says Satan, I never was drunk, nor I never committed adultery. What, dost thou watch? Says Satan, I never slept. Dost thou fast? Says Satan, I never ate any meat, or drank any beer or wine. What therefore, O man, says Satan, dost thou do more than I do? Yes, says he, Satan, I will tell thee what I do, I pray, and I serve the Lord, and walk humbly, and deny myself. True indeed then, says Satan, I confess herein thou dost go beyond me; for I am proud and I have exalted myself; and therefore that thou dost deny thyself, and walk humbly with thy God, herein indeed thou goest beyond me. And know, a christian does not only go beyond Satan, but he goes beyond moral, civil, legal men; and wherever the gospel comes in power, it works this disposition and frame of heart, there it is wrought indeed.

Fourthly, You will say, What is there in the gospel, or the way of the gospel, which lies in justification by faith alone, that can work a man's heart unto this frame and disposition?

I shall name three or four things of many.

I. The more a man does see the glory of God, the more humble he will be and deny himself, even in spiritual things. Ye may read how it was with Job, chap. ix. Ye do not read in all that book, that Job does any where in one chapter so much deny himself, as concerning his own righteousness, which he stood much upon to his friends, as in this ixth

chapter, verse 15, "Whom (speaking of God) though I were righteous, yet I would not answer, but I would make supplication to my Judge." Verse 16, "If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice." Then at the 20th verse, "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect it shall also prove me perverse." Verse the 21st, "Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise myself." Then at the 30th verse, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." But whence did all this self-denial in spiritual things proceed now? If you look into the former part of the chapter, ye shall see that Job had a great prospect of the glory of God: "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? (verse the 2nd) If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him. God is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: (verse the 4th, then verse the 5th) which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it ariseth not; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number." And now having this prospect of the greatness and glory of the Lord, he denies his own righteousness; denies himself in spiritual things. And ye know how it was with the prophet Isaiah, in the ixth chapter and 5th verse: "Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Woe is me, I am undone, a man of unclean lips. But stay, oh, thou blessed prophet, thou art a great, and hast been a great preacher, a gospel preacher; yea, thou art a prophet. Well, says he, yet, woe is me, for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips. Why, what is the matter? At the latter end of the verse: "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." And if ye look into the former verses of that chapter, ye shall find that it was a sight of Christ in his glory, as will more

fully appear, by comparing of that, and in the ivth chapter of the Revelation together, at your leisure. But where can a man see the glory of God but in the gospel? The gospel is called, the glorious gospel: there the glory of God is to be seen. With open face there, as in a glass, we behold the glory of the Lord.

II. The more I see Christ as an eminent, transcendent example of humility and self-denial, the more I learn to deny myself, even in spiritual things. Now the gospel holds forth Christ as the most eminent example of humility and self-denial; such an example as the sun never saw before, from first to last. At the first; "He thought it no robbery (says the apostle) to be equal with God: and yet he humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 6, 7. And at the last; says he unto his Father, "Yet not my will, but thy will be done," Luke xxii. 42. And if ye look into the xiiith chapter of John, ye shall find there, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, takes a towel and water, and falls down at the feet of his disciples, and washes their feet: verse the 4th, "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself; and after he had poured water into a basin, he began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with a towel. When the pharisee saw the woman coming unto Christ, and wash his feet, and wipe them with the hair of her head; he wondered, and said, Surely, if this had been a prophet, he would not have suffered a sinner to come so near to him." Did the pharisee wonder at this condescension, that Christ should humble himself so far as to suffer a poor woman to come so near him, as to wash his feet with her tears? Oh! what condescension is here, for ever to be wondered at, that the Lord Christ himself should down upon his knees, and wash the disciples' feet; that the great God of heaven and earth, the second Person, incarnate, should now come, fall down at the feet of sinners, Judas among them too, and wash his disciples' feet! When all power in heaven and earth was in his hands, that with those hands he should wash the feet of sinners!

But stay a little, it may be all power in heaven and earth was not then given into his hands. Yes, read for that purpose the 3rd verse, that goes before this story: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and

that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments."

But though all power in heaven and earth was given into his hands, it may be he did not know it. Yes, says the text, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself: after that, he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet." Oh, what self-denial is here! Was there ever such self-denial as here? And this, this does the gospel hold forth unto ye, and only to be learned in the gospel.

III. The more I see myself a debtor unto Jesus Christ, for all my gifts and for all my graces; the more humble I shall be, and the more I shall deny myself in spiritual things. Ye know how it is with a man that owes for his clothes: possibly a man may wear brave and fine clothes; but he owes for them at such a shop. While he is abroad, he swaggers, and is proud of his clothes; but when he comes into the shop where he owes for them, and looks upon the book, and what he hath to pay, he strikes sail then, and is more modest, ashamed, and blushes. The gospel is the great shop from whence we have all our gifts, and all our graces: and when I come into the gospel, there I see how infinitely I am a debtor to free grace for all I have: and though I may be proud in spirit at another time, yet if I come into the gospel, and see what an infinite debtor to free grace I am, for all that ever I wear upon the back of my soul, then I think, Oh! what cause have I to be humble! Shall I be proud? Shall not I deny myself in spiritual things? I say, the gospel is the shop of all our gifts and all our graces.

IV. The saving, justifying faith, is an emptying grace: it brings Christ into the soul; and when Christ comes into the soul, all other things must out. As when a king or prince comes into a house, the master of the house goes out of his own lodging, and all must out, to make room for the prince: so when Christ comes into one's soul, then all goes out, all other things go out. It is in our believing on Jesus Christ, as on our believing on God the

Father. "Ye believe in God (says Christ) believe also in me," John xiv. 1. Look how ye believe in God the Father, so do ye believe in me. Now, as when a man does believe in God the Father for provision, for outward provision; as seeing an all-sufficiency in God to provide; then he sees an insufficiency in all the creatures to help, and never before. So, when a man comes to believe in Christ, when he sees that all-sufficiency that is in Christ to redeem and satisfy for him; then he sees an insufficiency in all his own duties and righteousness, and never till then. The truth is, a man cannot come to Christ, unless he do forsake all. As ye cannot come *to* this side of the water or river, unless you come *from* that side of the river. Now faith, it is nothing else but a coming to Jesus Christ: and therefore, wherever there is a true, saving, justifying faith, a man does deny himself in spiritual things: he cannot write an I upon his own performance, upon his own duties.

If so, if all these things be true: how hard a thing is it, for a man to believe; how few are there in the world that do believe indeed! True, saving, justifying faith, it makes a man abundant in the work of the Lord; it makes a man live a spiritual life: but then it takes away that I from him, he cannot write an I upon what he does, as formerly he hath done. It makes a man live a spiritual life: but it makes him also to deny that spiritual life.

There are four streams, that this spiritual life is divided into: the stream of performance, the stream of obedience, the stream of our sufferings, the stream of enjoyment. True saving faith and the gospel, makes a man to deny himself in all these.

As for our performance and obedience; ye know what the apostle says concerning himself, Thus and thus I was, and thus and thus I have lived: but now I count all things as dung and dross in regard of Christ.

As for our sufferings: I have read of some martyrs in the primitive times; that being in prison and ready to suffer; divers came to comfort them, and called them, Blessed martyrs, No, say they, we are not worthy of the name of martyrs: by no means, they would not bear it, that they should call them martyrs: they denied themselves in their sufferings.

As for our enjoyment: ye know what the apostle says, "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all. Nevertheless, for your sakes," (says he) &c. Phil. i. 23. I am in a strait. And in another place, "I knew a man (says he) that was taken up into the third heaven, whether in the body, or out of the body I cannot say," 2 Cor. xii. 2. That was himself, but he would not own himself in it. And in another place he says, "That he could wish himself accursed for his brethren according to the flesh, that they might receive the gospel," Rom. ix. 3. Oh, what a self-denying frame of heart is here! But where is this self-denying frame of heart now to be found amongst us: how does this I, this same self, creep into all our speeches, and into all our doings? If it please the Lord to use a minister in his service: what a I-ing is there! I converted such a man, and I comforted such a man; and it was my ministry that did it: oh, what self is here! what a I-ing is here. So, if it please God to use a physician, for the curing of the outward man; it was my prescription, and it was my receipt, and I did it. And if a christian do but pray, or perform any duty; thus and thus I said, and these words I spake! did not I tell ye so? I told ye what would come to pass: oh, what a I-ing there is among people? how does self, this I and self creep into all our speeches, and into all our doings! But is this our faith, and is this the fruit of our faith? Every true believer, that seeks justification by faith alone, is an humble self-denying person; that denies himself in spiritual things. Then, how few are there that have true saving faith! Certainly, this saving, justifying faith, is another manner of thing than the world takes it to be.

But will some say, Upon this account, we hope we have all faith: for we can all say concerning our duties, and our performances, that they are nothing; my prayer is nothing, and my hearing is nothing, but Christ is all in all; yea, and we can say severally, all of us, as Paul does here, "I live, yet not I:" and therefore we all now hope, that we have faith indeed, for we are able thus to deny ourselves in spiritual things.

I wish it were so: that all were indeed able to deny them-

selves in spiritual things. But give me leave a little, to speak something to ye by way of convincement.

Are there not some here, that cannot deny themselves in outward things? Some here, that cannot deny themselves in their appetite, their eating and their drinking for Jesus Christ? Some here that cannot deny themselves of their wicked company? Some here that cannot deny themselves of a frothy, vain jest or jeer at the people of God for Christ's sake? Are there not some here that cannot deny themselves in clothes, in their words, in an oath, for Christ? Are there not some here, that cannot deny themselves in their passions for Christ? froward, and they live frowardly in their families? Our Saviour says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly," Matt. xi. 29. Meekness and humility go together: frowardness and pride therefore go together. Now, when you cannot deny yourselves in your passions, in your clothes, in your company, in a foolish word for Christ: dost thou think, that thou canst deny thyself, or dost deny thyself in thy duties, or in thy righteousness, or in thy spiritual things for Christ? Be not deceived.

Again. Are there not some here, that do seek themselves in spiritual things? Self-seeking, and self-advancing, as I have said, do differ, but the one is a sign of the other. A man can never deny himself, that seeks himself. I say, he cannot deny himself in spiritual things, that seeks himself in spiritual things. Now I pray consider it: when ye meet with any spiritual loss, whose account and head do ye set it down upon? Ye know how it is in trade, and merchandizing: some men trade for themselves; and some trade for others: if I trade for myself; when I meet with a loss, I set it down upon mine own account, and upon mine own head. If I trade for another; when I meet with a loss, I set it down upon his account, and upon his head. Now when you meet with spiritual losses; whose account do you set down your spiritual losses upon, upon whose head? Are there not many here, that set down their spiritual losses upon their own account? Indeed I have lost such an opportunity, and I have sinned so, and therefore shame will come unto me, vexation and trouble. What a dishonour is this unto Jesus Christ! Some indeed, when they meet with a spiritual loss, they set it down upon Christ's account; and they break

their hearts with the sense of this. Others, they set down all their spiritual losses upon their own heads, and their own accounts; what does this argue, but that they trade for themselves and not for Christ: they seek themselves, and therefore they do not deny themselves.

Are there not some, that do stint and limit themselves in the service of God? O my soul, thou hast enough for to bring thee to heaven already; and what needest thou more? Is not this for to seek one's self in spiritual things, is not here abundance of self?

Again, Are there not some, that dare prescribe the Lord? If a general gives out an order to have a thing done so, and a common soldier comes and says, No, not so, but thus: does not this common soldier advance himself in prescribing the general? The Lord Christ hath said, that we may come unto him, and the first thing of all is, for to come unto him: but man says, No, unless I find my heart humbled first, and broken first, I will not go to Christ, I have no rule for it. This is to prescribe Christ, and this is to advance one's self.

Again, Are there not some among us, that when they have been at duty in the company of others, have strange repetitions pass upon their hearts? When you pray all alone, you have no such repetitions; but when you have prayed, or been exercising in a company, doth not your heart run back sometimes and say Thus and thus I said, and this and this I did, and this expression I had? Hath there not been strange kind of repetitions, after you have performed duty in company? Is not here self, is not here the I?

Again, Are there not some, that never to this day were sensible of their pride in spiritual things? now I dare boldly say unto thee from the Lord, Thou hast not yet learned this lesson of self-denial in spiritual things, that wert never humbled for thy pride in spiritual things. I repeat it again, I say, If thou wert never humbled for thy pride in spiritual things, to this day, the Lord knows, thou hast not learned this great lesson of self-denial in spiritual things. I say no more by way of convincement; only this: there is nothing that a professor is more apt to be proud of, than spiritual things. Before a man takes up a profession; possibly then

he is proud of his clothes; or he is proud of his friends; or he is proud of his fine house and the like, but after once a man comes to take up a profession, there is nothing that he is more apt to be proud of than his gifts, graces, and spiritual things. For, look where a man's excellency lies, there his pride grows. Now the excellency of a professor lies in spiritual things; and therefore there his pride grows, and there he is most apt to be proud. Yet let me tell ye, it is a more dangerous thing to be proud of a man's duties, and spiritual gifts, than to be proud of clothes, than to be proud of these outward things; for this pride of spiritual gifts, it is directly opposite to a man's justification. And the more secret and hidden any thing is, the more dangerous it is: and when sin and pride lies under duties, and spiritual things, then it is hidden indeed. The more bold a sin is, the greater it is; when a sin shall dare to come into the presence of God, then it is bold indeed: now pride in spiritual things comes more into the presence of God than pride of clothes and these outward things do, and therefore it is the bolder and the greater sin; and therefore, who would not take heed thereof! who would not labour for this self-denial, to be humble, and denying of one's self in spiritual things? Truly, the first step to humility, is, to see one's pride: and the first step to self-denial, is to be convinced of one's self-advancing.

But, will some poor soul say, that hears all this, I am convinced of mine own pride and selfishness in all my duties; I can do nothing but self gets in; I write an I upon all that I do; I cannot deny myself in spiritual things. I have heard of some, that have been so humble and self-denying, that they have been willing and contented to go to hell if God would have it so: but as for me, the Lord knows I am not contented so; I have a proud heart, and self creeps into all that I do, and therefore I fear that I have not this faith, therefore I fear that the gospel never came in power upon my soul to this day.

Though every true believer be an humble, self-denying person, and is made partaker of this gospel self-denial; yet know, there is something of self, some remains of self that still continues with the best, something still that will taste of the cask. Though the onion that is beaten in the mortar be

taken out of the mortar, yet the mortar will smell of it. A godly, gracious man, is sensible of his own pride and self-advancing in spiritual things, and will cry out and say, Oh, what a proud heart have I, a self-advancing heart have I! But show me that man that was ever so transformed, melted, changed into the mould of the gospel, but still some savour of self remains.

Whereas you say, that some are willing and contented to go to hell if God would have it so. I have heard it of some; yea, and that some ministers have put people upon this trial, as thus: Art thou contented to go to hell if God would have it so? I say, I have heard that even some ministers have put people upon such a trial as this is; but where is their commission, where hath any minister such a commission from the Lord, to put poor people upon such a trial as this is? Soul, art thou contented to go to hell if God would have it so? Let any minister shew me his commission to put a soul upon such a trial as this is. And where, soul, hast thou a commission to put thyself upon such a trial? No, we may have an eye to the recompense of reward; the Lord Christ himself had so, he had an eye himself unto the recompence of reward: and therefore, though thou canst not bring thy soul unto this height, yet there may be some humility, even gospel self-denial, that may lie under the leaf. This gospel humility and self-denial, it is, as I may so speak, the soul violet. The violet, ye know, it is a very sweet flower, but it lies very low, it hangs down its head, and it lies under other herbs, obscure herbs, as if it loved to be unseen, but it smells very sweetly; and if you would find out this sweet-smelling herb and violet, you must lift up other obscure leaves, and there you shall see it. So this humility and self-denial, it lies under other duties and under other exercises; and if you would see it, you must lift up other leaves. Though thou art not able to attain to that height as to say, thou wouldest be contented to go to hell if God would have it so; yet thou mayest have this sweet violet, though it lie under other herbs, yet thou mayest see it, and it may be smelled. Only this, if at any time self breaks out, if at any time thy soul begins to be advanced in regard of duty or spiritual things; I do here call upon you, fall down before the Lord, and humble thyself before him

for the pride of thy heart concerning spiritual things, and labour to get this self-denial in spiritual things. I am not to speak of self-denial at large, but I call upon you from the Lord to labour to get self-denial in spiritual things. And take these two or three motives to it.

1. The more you deny yourself in spiritual things, the more you shall be sure to keep them. Says Chrysostom, The best treasury to keep any good work in is, forgetfulness of that good work. Ye know, that if a man be to travel, the way to keep himself and his money is, not to go to the market-cross and there proclaim that he hath so much money about him, or to carry with him in his journey; the only way for a man to lose his money is to let it be known, and to brag of it abroad. And truly what is the reason that so many in these days of ours have made shipwreck? Some heretofore have been very forward, had great gifts, great parts; and now they are rotten, they have lost all. Why? Because they were proud of them, and did not walk humbly under them.

2. The more you do deny yourselves in spiritual things, the more humble you will be in other thiugs; and the more humble you are, the more sweetly shall you live in your own bosom, yea, towards and amongst others. Some possibly complain of a froward spirit: oh, says one, I am of an angry disposition; my husband, my children, my servants, my wife or my friends, cannot meddle with me or touch me, but I am ready to break out in distemper, anger and frowardness; the Lord knows I have a very froward and peevish heart of mine own. But what is the reason? Pride, pride is the cause of frowardness. Ye see how it is with a bladder: let a bladder be blown full of wind, and though you may take it at the end, yet notwithstanding you cannot hold the bladder in your hand, or the greatest hand in the town cannot hold the bladder. But take a pin and prick the bladder, and the least child may hold it then. What is the reason that men cannot be held, cannot be handled, cannot be touched by their neighbours, friends, and those that are about them, they cannot be grasped and walked with? but because they are proud and swollen. Therefore get an humble and self-denying heart, and thou shalt walk more sweetly with thine own soul and others that are about thee.

3. The more you deny yourselves in spiritual things, the more you shall be exalted in them. I say, the more you deny yourselves in spiritual things, the more those spiritual things shall grow, be exalted, the more increased. "Humble thyself (or yourselves, says the apostle) under the hand of the Lord, and he will exalt you in due time," 1 Pet. v. 6. And let me tell you this, that look what that is wherein you do humble yourselves before the Lord, therein the Lord will exalt you. Dost thou humble thyself before the Lord in regard of these outward things? there will the Lord exalt thee. Dost thou humble thyself before the Lord in regard of thy parts and thy gifts? there will the Lord exalt thee. Dost thou humble thyself before the Lord in regard of thine own graces, and thine own obedience, and thine own righteousness? therein will the Lord exalt thee. Ye know that John the Baptist said concerning Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease," John iii. 30. And says John again concerning our Saviour Christ, "Whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose," John i. 27; or, whose shoes I am not worthy to carry. Mark how he humbles himself to Jesus Christ; and mark how Christ honours John: oh, says Christ, "There is not a greater among them that are born of women, than John the Baptist," Matt. xi. 11; Christ exalts him. And so says the Centurion, "Oh, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof," Matt. viii. 8. Mark how he humbles himself here before the Lord Christ; and mark what our Saviour says of him, "I tell you, I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel," verse 10. So that look *where* thou humblest thyself, *there* will the Lord exalt thee. Soul, dost thou desire therefore that the Lord would exalt thy graces, that thy gifts and graces should be increased? Humble thyself there, and learn to deny thyself in spiritual things, not only in regard of outward but in spiritual things, that you may say, "I live, yet not I."

But you will say, This is a hard thing; what may we do, that we may be able to deny ourselves in spiritual things?

Never perform any duty, but as often as thou canst, reflect upon thy performance, and observe the defects thereof. When ye write a letter, after ye have written it you read it over; or whatever ye write almost, if it be of any concernment, after ye have written it, then you read it over; and if ye find any

thing amiss, then ye blot it out, and when ye have done, ye take your sand-box and throw dust upon it; or ye go to the chimney, and take ashes and throw upon the paper. Will ye do thus for your letters that you write, and will ye not do thus for your duties and performances? When you have prayed, and performed duty, go, go and look it over, and there you will find many defects; many things to be blotted out, and many things to be put in; and when you have found the defects in your duty, throw dust upon it, and humble yourselves before the Lord.

If you would deny yourselves in spiritual things, observe much the in-comes of the Spirit of the Lord upon your soul; the way and manner of it, how suddenly, how unexpectedly, how freely the Lord by his Spirit breathes upon your soul. When your heart is dead, when your heart is hard, when you say, God is now gone, and will never return again; oh, what freedom once I had in prayer! but now my heart is hard, and I shall never be able to pray again: then comes the Spirit of God, and breathes upon your soul, and gives you prayer again. Now, if I would but observe the breathings of the Spirit of the Lord, how it comes upon me thus, when I am dead, when my heart is hard, when I say I shall never have prayer again; if I could but observe the freeness of the Spirit's breathing over my soul, and raising up my heart to duty again, should I be proud of duty, think you? Should I not rather say, Shall I be proud? I was dead, my heart hard, and had not the Spirit come and breathed upon my soul, I had never been able to pray again, but had been locked up for ever: and shall I be proud? Observe the in-comes of the Spirit; the way and manner of it: be much in this, and you will be able to deny yourselves in spiritual things.

Look much into the gospel; study much the gospel and the way of the gospel. The more you see an humble Christ, the more you will learn humility. Where shall you see an humble Christ but in the gospel? The more you see a self-denying Christ, the more you will learn self-denial. And where shall you read of a self-denying Christ but in the gospel? The more ye see the free and rich grace of God, the more you will deny yourselves in spiritual things. And where shall ye see the free-grace of God but in the gospel? The

more faith ye have, the more ye will deny yourselves in spiritual things. And where shall ye get faith but in the preaching of the gospel, and in studying of the gospel? This grace of humility and self-denial in spiritual things, grows only in the garden of the gospel, in the bed of the gospel. There is a field humility, and there is a common, or a field self-denial, as I may so speak. As ye see it is with your flowers and herbs: there is a garden thyme, and there is a field thyme; there is a garden rose, and there is a field rose; there is a garden honey-suckle, and there is a field honey-suckle: so there is a field self-denial, that grows among heathen and among moral people, that can deny themselves of this or that particular thing; their appetite, clothing, or now and then their company. And there is a gospel self-denial, a mysterious self-denial. But this self-denial in spiritual things, grows nowhere but in the garden of the gospel; there thou shalt see an humble Christ, and become humble; there thou shalt see a self-denying Christ, and become self-denying. Therefore study the gospel, and study the way of the gospel. You that have walked in a legal way, study the gospel, and the way of the gospel. I tell you, in the words of the apostle, "If the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that perish," 2 Cor. iv. 3. If the gospel, and the way of the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that perish. And therefore go unto the Lord, and beseech him to open to you the way of the gospel; and in this gospel you shall be able to learn this self-denial, and be able to say, as here the apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

SERMON IV.

"*Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*"
GAL. II. 20.

IN these words ye have another property of our spiritual life; it is a Christ advancing life: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The former words, "Yet not I," hold forth a depression and annihilation of a man's self in spiritual things. These words, "But Christ liveth in me," hold

forth the advancings of Jesus Christ. He gives the power, strength and honour of all unto Jesus Christ, "But CHRIST liveth in me."

In the words there are these three things especially observable:

I. The presence of Christ with a believer: "Christ in me."

II. The efficacy of his presence: "He liveth in me."

III. The constancy of his effectual presence: he does not stay for a day or a night in me, but, "he LIVETH in me."

And accordingly there are three doctrines that these words afford.

I. Christ is in all believers. For he does personate a believer all along, when he says, I, as ye have heard; Christ is in each believer.

II. Christ liveth in all believers.

III. That Christ does live more in a believer than a believer doth himself: "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

I shall speak only to the former.

Christ is in all believers. Christ is in each believer. Every saint and child of God hath Christ within him.

This truth was so commonly known in the apostle's time, that he says unto the Corinthians, "Know ye not, how that Christ is in ye, unless ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. That is, unless ye be reprobates, ye may know that Christ is in you. So our Saviour Christ himself, in that book of John, vi. 56., "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth (or abideth) in me, and I in him." And so often in the xivth, xvth and xvith chapters of John, Christ speaks to this purpose: "I in you, and you in me." So that the Scripture is full of this, Christ is in all believers, Christ is in each believer.

For the clearing of this great truth. We must first inquire, How Christ may be said to be in a believer.

And for that, ye must know, that as God is in the world, and the things of the world, several ways, so Christ is in believers.

1. God is in the world, and the things of the world, in regard of his power. He is in all the world, as we say a king is in all his kingdom, because his power extendeth to all his kingdom. And so God is in all the world because his power

extendeth to all the world. And thus Jesus Christ is in a believer. But this is not all.

2. God is in the world, and in the things of the world, by way of presence. "Whither shall I go from thy presence?" says the Psalmist. "If I go up into heaven, thou art there," &c. Psalm cxxxix. 7, 8. And thus also is Jesus Christ in the heart of a believer. But yet this is not all.

3. God is said to be in the world, and in the things of the world, in regard of his essence: essentially present unto all the world. For every attribute of God is like unto God; his attributes are all infinite; he is infinite in wisdom, justice, power and mercy: and so he is infinite in his essence, and therefore essentially present unto all the world. And thus, also, Christ is in the heart of a believer, as God. But yet this is not all.

4. God is said to be in the world, and the things of the world, by way of special manifestation. And so God was in the temple, not because his essence was more in the temple than in another place, but he was in the temple by way of manifestation of himself unto his people there. And thus, also, Jesus Christ is in the hearts of those that are believers, specially manifesting and revealing himself there unto them. But yet this is not all neither.

5. God is said to be in a creature by way of personal union, being personally united to him. As when the Deity, by the second Person, was united unto our nature, unto flesh: God was in Christ, "in whom the fulness of the Deity dwells bodily," says the apostle, Col. ii. 9. And thus, in a spiritual and mystical way and manner, Christ is in all believers by his Spirit, the third Person: not only the graces of Christ, but Christ himself, in and by his Spirit, is in the heart of a believer; I say, Christ by his Spirit. And therefore Chrysostom observes, Whereas it is said, in the viiith of the Romans, and the 9th verse, that "if the Spirit of God dwell in ye;" at the 10th verse following, it is said, "If Christ be in you;" those two being made one, one being put for the other. Now I say, that Christ that is in a believer, is not the habit of grace only, which the saints have in their souls, but Christ himself by his Spirit. And therefore if ye look into that viii chapter to the Romans, ye shall find, that besides the grace of the Spirit, the Spirit itself is said to be

given unto us: verse 5, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Not only the grace of the Holy Ghost given unto us, and shed abroad in our hearts, but the Spirit itself which is given unto us. And so in that xvith chapter of John, where the Lord promises to send the Comforter. "He shall teach thee (says Christ); and he shall teach thee all things; and he will shew unto ye things to come," verse 13. But the habits of grace cannot teach a man, and shew him things to come. And what shall he teach? "Whatsoever he shall hear, that he shall speak," verse 13. This is the Comforter, this is the Spirit. Now the habits of grace do not thus speak and hear, and therefore, certainly, the Spirit of Christ is in the hearts of God's people, and in the hearts of believers; it is more than the bare habit of grace, the gifts and the graces of the Spirit. And to this purpose it is clearly spoken by the apostle, in the viiith chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and the 11th verse, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This Spirit cannot be meant habitual grace. For it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in you. So that plainly, then, in a spiritual and mystical way, Christ is in each believer by his Spirit; and this Christ in a believer, is not the gifts and the graces of the Spirit, but Christ himself by his Spirit.

This I confess rises high; but herein I am not alone: divers school-men and fathers, and of our own divines, concurring with me. The Reverend Mr. Perkins, it was his speech, That the person of a believer, is united to the person of Christ. But I shall give you the words of an eminent preacher, that is now in heaven, as we have them in the works that he hath left. Says he, 'It hath been a great dispute among the school-men, whether a believer does receive the Holy Ghost itself, or only the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost: but, says he, it is a question, where there needs be no question; and dispute, where there needs no dispute: for the Scripture is clear, that we do not only receive the gifts and the graces of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost itself, for are we not said to be, "The temple of the Holy Ghost?" 1 Cor. vi. 19.

and this sets out the abundant kindness and goodness of God: as, says he yet, it is more kindness to give a man fruit and the tree, than to give him barely the fruit: so it is abundantly more grace in God, to give a man the Holy Ghost itself, rather than to give him only the gifts and the graces of the Holy Ghost. And indeed, what greater comfort can there be than this? That believers are not only made partakers of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, but of Christ himself, Christ really in all believers, by his Spirit.'

You will say unto me, But how can this be; we have ordinarily understood it otherwise; and so we have heard it preached too, That Christ in a believer, is nothing else but the grace of Christ; and the Spirit in a believer, is nothing else but the gifts, graces, and the operations of the Spirit: and indeed, how can it be otherwise? For if Christ be really united unto each believer, really in a believer by his Spirit, and so made one with him; then a believer may say, I am Christ, and I am the Spirit; which is *Montanism*, and which is blasphemy: and therefore, how can this be, that Christ is really united to each believer by his Spirit, and really in a believer by his Spirit?

I confess this is very hard to understand: and when I consider the in-being of Christ in a believer, I remember that story that is written concerning Austin; That walking by the sea-side, he saw a boy take a mussel-shell, and go to the sea, carrying water with his mussel-shell into a ditch that was by, out of the sea into the small trench: he asked the boy, what he would do? Says he, I will empty all the sea into that ditch: and he smiled, and told him that he could not do it: says he, No more able are you, with the mussel-shell of your understanding, to carry out the ocean of the Trinity in a small tractate and discourse of your own. And what is your understanding, but as a little mussel-shell in regard of Christ, and the glory of the Trinity? Surely, we are not able with this little mussel-shell, for to carry out all the depth of this truth in a small discourse. But it is a great mystery. Are you able to tell me, how the child is formed in the mother's womb? Or are ye able to tell me, how the soul is united to the body? Who then can tell exactly, how Christ is united to the soul of a believer? It is a

great mystery, one of the great mysteries of the gospel. But because our Saviour hath said, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and to others it is not," Matt. xiii. 11; therefore we should all labour to understand it. And that ye may not be misled herein, as divers of late have been, into strange kind of blasphemous speeches, I shall give you these three or four propositions or distinction about it.

1. You must know, that though Christ be really united unto each believer, yet this unition, or union is a voluntary act, and not a natural act, and so Christ may unite himself unto the soul, so far as it pleases himself: it is not a natural act, but a voluntary act; and being an act wherein he is free, he may unite himself unto the soul, so far as he pleases, and no farther. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, hath not united himself so far unto the soul of a believer, that a believer should say, I am Christ, and I am the Spirit: for, then a believer were to be worshipped as well as Christ, if he were Christ.

2. You must know this, That there is a great deal of difference, between joining unto another, by way of contact or touching; and joining unto another by way of composition. As for example, the sea and the land, they are joined together, they are united: but how? not by way of composition, but by way of contact; the sea touches the land, and the land touches the sea: yet the land cannot say, I am the sea; nor the sea cannot say, I am the land: why? because it is an union only by contact, by touching, and not by composition, one being compounded of the other. So the union that it is between Christ and a believer, is by way of spiritual contact; Christ touching the soul by his Spirit; and the soul touching Christ by faith. I say, it is an union by way of spiritual contact and touching, and not by composition; and therefore a believer cannot say, that I am Christ, and I am the Spirit.

3. You must know, there is a two-fold in-being. One whereby essences are applied unto each other; and another whereby essences are mixed together. I will make it as plain as I can, thus: ye see in a heap of stone, and wheat, they both make but one heap. and the stone may say, I am in this heap, and the wheat may say, I am in this heap? but the stone cannot say, I am the wheat; nor the wheat cannot say,

I am the stone: why? because though they be united and joined together in one heap, it is by way of application of one essence unto another, one being applied unto another. But now, take water and wine, and mingle them together, and there every part may say, I am water, and I am wine: why? because there is an union by way of mixture. Now there is a great union between Christ and a believing soul: yet a believing soul, though he be really united to Christ by the Spirit, cannot say, I am Christ, or I am the Spirit: why? because it is an union by way of application, and not by way of mixture, as wine and water mingled together: if it were an union by way of essences, then a believer might say, I am Christ, and I am the Spirit: but it is an union by way of application, a believer being applied to Christ, and Christ applied unto a believer.

4. You must know this, that there is a great deal of difference between the inbeing of a spiritual thing in a material, and the inbeing of one material or corporal thing in another. I shall make it as plain as I can, and it will be of concernment to you. Take a body, now, and let that be mixed with another, and each part may say, I am that which I am joined to: but take the spirit, or a spiritual being, and let that be mixed with a more material being; and then the material being cannot say, I am the spirit, and the spirit, I am the matter. As now ye see in the great union between the soul and the body; the soul is in every part of a man, *tota in toto:* the soul, says the philosopher, is wholly in every part; the whole soul of man being in every part of the body: yet, notwithstanding, the body cannot say, I am the soul, nor the soul cannot say, I am the body, because they are thus united together. Why? Because here is an union of a spiritual thing with a more material, which does keep the natures distinct. Or thus give me leave to express it to ye: iron and fire being joined together, your fire is in every part of the iron; and yet, notwithstanding, though the fire be in every part of the iron, the iron cannot say, I am the fire, nor the fire cannot say, I am the iron. Why? Because here is a more spiritual body in a more material body, and so the natures are kept distinct. Or if you will, yet further: ye see the light in the air; the light is more spiritual than the air, and the light is in every part of the air; yet, notwithstand-

ing, the air cannot say, I am the light, nor the light cannot say, I am the air; but these two are kept distinct. Why? Because here is an union of that which is more spiritual, unto that which is more material. So I say here, though Christ be really united unto each believer, yet, notwithstanding, the soul of a believer is more material; though not in itself material, yet in respect of Christ, the soul is a gross nature in regard of the Spirit of Christ: and being thus therefore united, these natures are kept distinct; the Spirit of Christ is kept distinct from the nature of the soul, and the soul from the nature of the Spirit. And therefore the soul of a believer, though united really unto Christ by the Spirit, cannot say, I am the Spirit, or I am Christ.

But if we look, will some say, into the xviith chapter of John, our Lord and Saviour Christ seéms to speak this way, at the 20th and 21st verses. "Neither pray I for these alone (says he), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Here Christ prays that believers may be one with him, as he and the Father were one. But if Christ be really united to each believer by his Spirit, what difference is there between this union and the hypostatical union? The second Person was united unto our nature, to our flesh: and if now Christ be united unto a believer by his Spirit, which is the third Person, what is the difference between the hypostatical union and the union of a believer with Christ by the Spirit?

Much every way. For take a believer, and though Christ be united unto a believer really by his Spirit, yet notwithstanding, the believer is not said to be assumed, the Spirit doth not assume the heart of a believer, as the second Person did assume our flesh; and though we are united unto Christ by the Spirit, yet not said to be assumed by the Spirit.

Again, Though Christ be really united unto each believer, yet it is no personal union, as the hypostatical union is. A man is a person before he is united so unto Christ by the Spirit. But now Christ's soul and body, they were not a person before united unto the second Person: but the soul and body of Christ, and the second Person in the Trinity united together make up one person. I say that is a personal union, all making up but one person. But now a

believer, he is a person before his union with Christ by the Spirit; he is a person, a wicked person, but he is a person.

Again, The union that is between Christ and a believer, it is in respect of the other union, an accidental union, Christ united unto the soul by faith, by the intervening of grace and accidents. But now the second Person was united unto our nature, and unto our flesh, not by the intervening of any grace, or any accident, but there substance was united unto substance by the second Person. I say, it was not an union by the intervening of any grace: for though all graces were in Christ, yet the union of the second Person to our flesh, is not by the intervening of any grace, faith or the like: but now our union to Christ is by the intervening of grace, of faith, and so this union is but an accidental union in regard of that.

Again, Though Christ be united unto all believers by his Spirit; yet he is so far united unto a believer, as to make him a member of the body only: but the second Person was united unto our nature, and unto our flesh, to make Christ the Mediator. Indeed, if God were united to man so far as to make him Mediator between God and man, then he might say, I am God, and I am Christ: but, I say, this union being voluntary, he does so far unite himself unto the soul of a believer, as to make him a member of the body only, and not a Mediator. But when the second Person was united to our nature, the union was to make the Person a Mediator. And thus ye see, there is a great deal of difference between that hypostatical union, and this mystical union of a believer.

And whereas it is said in that xviith of John, that Christ prays that we may be one with him, as he is with the Father: "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one." I answer: This is an *as* of similitude, and not of equality: Christ prays unto the Father, that believers may be one with him; not by way of equality; that a believer should be equally one with Christ, as Christ is with the Father: for then Christ should pray, that a believer might be worshipped too, which he never did: and if that Christ here should pray, that a believer might be one with Christ, as Christ with the Father, in regard of equality; then Christ should pray that a believer should be one with him from eternity: for says he unto his Father in the beginning of the chapter, "Glorify me

with thyself, with the same glory which I had with thee before the world was." Christ was one with the Father before the world was. Therefore, if he should pray, that a believer might be one with him, in regard of equality, he should pray, that a believer might be one with him, in that respect: which were impossible. But he does not pray, that a believer might be one with him by way of equality, as he is one with the Father by way of equality, but similitude. And yet divers learned and reverend men, think the meaning of that place rather to be this, That they may be one among themselves: Christ prays, that they may be all one; that is: Lord, I pray, that they may love and agree together; he prays for union among themselves. But suppose it be taken the other way, that the Lord Jesus Christ here does pray, that believers may be one with him, as he is with the Father: that is, not in regard of equality, but in regard of similitude; that as Christ is one with the Father in a way suitable to him, so believers may be one with Christ in a way suitable unto them.

But suppose then, you will say, that a believer is not one with Christ in this height of oneness; how may it appear, by way of scripture reason, that Christ is really united unto each believer, and that he is really in the soul of a believer by the Spirit; not only in regard of infused habits, habits of grace, grace inherent; but that Christ himself is really in a believer by his Spirit?

Ye know, that we are united to Christ by faith: and look what faith lays hold upon, *that* it brings into the soul: but now, faith does not lay hold upon the graces of Christ barely, but upon Christ himself, and therefore Christ himself by faith is brought into the soul, and is there really in the soul of a believer by his Spirit.

Christ is in a believer, as a believer is in Christ. Now a believer is not in Christ; that is, in his graces. When we say, that we are in Christ; we do not mean that we are in the graces of Christ, but a believer is in Christ himself, as in the common head. A believer is not in the graces of Christ only, but he is in Christ himself. So Christ is not in a believer only by his graces, but he is really there in the soul of a believer by his Spirit.

If the Lord Christ were not really in the soul of a believer by his Spirit, besides those habits of grace, actings and ope-

rations of the Spirit; then how would there be three that bare witness? The apostle tells us; "There are three that bear witness in heaven, and in our hearts, the Spirit, water and blood," 1 John v. 8. Water; what is that? That is sanctification; a man's sanctification does bear witness to him that he is the child of God, that is, water. But now, sanctification consists, either in the habit of grace, or in the acting of grace; if therefore the Spirit of Christ in a believer, were nothing else but grace, inherent grace, then it were all one with the testimony of water: but there are three that bear witness, there is the testimony of the Spirit, there is the testimony of blood, and there is the testimony of water: if by the Spirit we are to understand only, the grace of Christ, the habit of grace in the soul, then there would be but two that bear witness, namely, water and blood; because the other would be all one with water: water being meant only sanctification: but now there are three that do bear witness unto a soul that is in Christ, the Spirit and blood and water; and therefore Christ is really in a believer, Christ really united unto all believers by his Spirit.

What is the benefit of all this? For suppose that we grant this, That Christ in a believer is not only grace, and the habits of grace in the soul, but Christ himself is really in the soul of a believer by his Spirit: what profit, benefit, or comfort will come unto a believer more this way, than the other way?

Much every way: If Jesus Christ be really united to each believer by his Spirit, and really in him in this spiritual and mystical way; then a believer shall have more blessed and glorious communion with Christ than the other way. For union is the root of communion: the husband and the wife are first joined together, and united, and then they have communion with one another and fellowship in their goods and estate; union is the ground of communion; and the nearer the union, the greater the communion. Now if Christ should be only in a believer by the habit of grace, the union would not be so great: but if this be true, that Christ is really in a believer by his Spirit, Christ really united to each believer, here the union is dearer, and therefore the communion and fellowship that a believer shall have with Christ, a great deal more and more blessed.

If Christ be really united unto a believer, unto all believers by his Spirit, then his love must needs be infinite towards believers. If that his graces only were in them, he would love them; because thereby they should be made like unto him: but now, if his own Spirit be in a believer, then his love must needs be infinite unto a believer, and a believer's love infinite to him again in his way. This is a great and glorious privilege.

If Christ be really in a believer, really united to each believer by his Spirit; then a believer, knowing this, may say, I have now somewhat more than any hypocrite can attain unto. Says a poor soul, many times, If I had but that grace that no hypocrite can attain unto, then my soul would he quiet within me; but now, as for gifts and graces, there is no hypocrite but may attain to them, or something that is like to them. What will ye instance in; will ye instance in faith? It is said of Simon Magus, Acts viii. 13, that he believed. Will ye instance in repentance? It is said of Judas, Matt. xxvii. 3, that he also repented; and, Heb. xii. 17, Esau that sought the birth-right with tears. Will ye instance in hearing of the word with joy? It is said, Matt. xiii. 20, so did the false ground. Will ye instance in the partakings of the heavenly gift and powers of the world to come? Men have a taste of these, and yet fall away. Heb. vi. 5, 6. Will ye instance in sanctification itself? It is said of certain wicked men, in the xth of the Hebrews, "That they trample upon the blood of Christ, wherewithal they are sanctified." So that even a wicked man, in Scripture phrase, is said to be sanctified; one that falls away and comes to nought. But where do ye find, in all the Scripture, that the Lord Christ is said to be in an hypocrite? An hypocrite is said to repent, to believe, to receive the word with joy, and to be sanctified, in a large sense; but where do ye find, in all the Bible, of any hypocrite that Christ is said to be in him—really united unto an hypocrite? No, this is the great privilege of a believer only; "Christ in you the hope of glory," Col. i. 27.

If Jesus Christ be really united unto each believer, by his Spirit, then a believer shall never die again—spiritually die again. I have read of a woman, that when her husband was dead, she would eat and drink the ashes of her husband; have his body burnt to ashes, and so eat and drink the ashes

of her husband: and being asked the reason, Because, says she, I mean to part with him no more; I have parted with him once already, when we were one, but now I will be made one with him in another way, and I will part no more with him. So, if Christ be in a believer, really in a believer, Christ really united unto each believer by his Spirit; then Christ and that believer shall never part again, that believer shall die no more; for the same Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead, dwelling in a believer, shall also raise up a poor believer, yea, though he fall into the grave of sin; he shall never die spiritually again upon this account.

If Christ be really united unto all believers by his Spirit, then they may come with boldness unto the throne of grace, and with unlimited expectations of mercy from God the Father, and from Christ Jesus. The nearer ye are unto any person, the more boldness ye have towards him, and the larger will your expectations be from him. If a man marry his servant; whilst she was his maid, she was not so bold, nor could expect so much from him: when she becomes the wife, then she is more bold, and can expect more, because now she is nearer. A child may have more boldness, and expect more from the father than the servant; and the servant that is within doors more than the servant that works in the field; but the wife, that is nearest, she is most bold, comes with most boldness into the presence of the man, and hath the largest expectations from him, because she is nearest to him. So the nearer that the soul of a believer does get unto God, the more boldness he may have when he comes to God, and the larger expectations of mercy from him. Now if Christ were in a believer only by the habit of grace, and Christ in the soul were nothing else but the habit of grace; here were yet a great distance from Christ: but now, if Jesus Christ be really united unto each believer by his Spirit, here is a close union indeed. And therefore, upon this account, every believer may come with boldness now, and with unlimited expectations of mercy from God the Father, being brought thus near, that Christ himself is really in the believer's soul. And what a glorious and blessed condition is every believer in now upon this account.

Here I would stand, admire, and call upon you all to admire the condescending, glorious, and unspeakable love of

Christ. It was an infinite love of Christ to condescend so far, as to come down into our nature when he was incarnate; but as if he were not near enough to us then, he comes down into the heart of a believer by his Spirit. When Christ was upon the earth, we were in him as in a common person: now Christ is in heaven, he is in us by his Spirit. What glorious, condescending love is here! If a father portion a child, set him up in a good trade, and the child decay through his own folly, the father will not portion him again; possibly he may help him, but he will not give him; ordinarily parents do not give so great a portion to help him up again, somewhat the parents will do, but not so much as at the first. The Lord of heaven, he puts a great portion into our hands at first, and we decayed, and broke; and behold, the Lord does not only give us as good a portion as we had at the first, but infinitely better; for now the Lord Christ is united unto each believer, now he comes and dwells in the soul of a believer by his Spirit. The Psalmist wondered and admired at the love of God to man: "O Lord (says the Psalmist) how excellent is thy name! Lord, what is man?" Psalm viii. 1, 4. Why? Lord, what is man that thou visitest him! He wondered at the love of God that would visit man. But behold a greater love than so, to visit poor man, for Christ is come down into the soul of a believer, he is come into him by his Spirit; not only come to visit him, but Christ really united unto each believer by his Spirit. What glorious and condescending love is here!

Upon this account, no wicked man should dare to oppose any of the children of God. Why? Because Christ is in them: Christ not only in his graces, but Christ really in all believers by his Spirit. And will a man dare to speak evil of him that is one with Christ; or to defile the temple of the Lord, and the dwelling-place of the Lord? "He that defiles the temple of the Lord, him will God destroy," 1 Cor. iii. 17. Take heed what you do, if there be any opposers here.

What abundance of comfort is here unto all believers. Christ is in you of a truth; not only by the infusion of his grace, but Christ really in you by his Spirit. It is some comfort to a sickly man, that he hath a physician always in the house with him; and to a woman that is near her time

of travail, that the midwife is in the house with her. What comfort is it then unto a poor soul, that Christ is always in him, really in him by his Spirit. You that are believers, will not this content you? He is too covetous whom God cannot suffice. He hath all things, that hath him that hath all things. Now every believer hath Christ, Christ really in a believer by his Spirit; not notionally, not by the habit of grace only; but Christ is really united unto each believer by his Spirit. Here is comfort, comfort, comfort, unto all those that are believers.

But I fear that Christ is not in me, I do not find or perceive that Christ is in me, and therefore I can have none of the comfort of this doctrine. Were Christ really in me by the Spirit, Christ would be working in me; but I do not find these workings of Jesus Christ in me; and were the Spirit in me, (it is quick, lively and powerful,) I should do great things for God; but alas, I do nothing for him, und therefore I fear that the Lord Christ is not in me of a truth.

I grant, that where Christ comes into the soul, he does cause the soul to do great things for God, greater than it could do before. So it was with Zaccheus, so with the jailor, so with Paul, and so with divers others. But then ye must know, that a work is great or small according to the opposition that it does meet withal. Though a work or duty be small in itself, yet if it meet with great opposition and break through it, it is a great work. It was no great matter for the poor woman to give one or two mites into the treasury; but she having no more, and it being all her livelihood, it was a great matter. It is no great matter for a man to pray, and to pray constantly, and to frequent the ordinances; but when a poor creature shall meet with all opposition from his relations, then it may be a great matter to do this. It is no great matter, comparatively, for to stay one's soul upon Jesus Christ; but in the time of temptation, when one's soul is full of fears, and a man does look upon Christ as his enemy, then to cast himself into the arms of Christ, and to stay the soul upon Christ then, this is a greater work. So that the work is great, though small in itself, if it meet with great opposition and break through all.

But whosoever you are that make this objection, fearing that you are not in Christ, and so have not the comfort of

this doctrine; give me leave to propound three or four questions to you.

1. Who and what are those, and whose servants are they, that do come into and go out of your souls; are they not the retinue and the servants of Jesus Christ? Ye say, Such a man or a nobleman lives here, for his servants go in and out daily. And what words come out of your mouth, and what words go in at you ear; whose servants are they ordinarily? Are you ever better than when you are thinking or speaking of Jesus Christ, and hearing from Christ? Certainly, if his servants do most ordinarily come in and go out, the Master is within, Christ is within.

2. Do not ye find your souls in some measure naturalized unto the work of Christ? the things of Christ and the work of Christ in some measure naturalized unto your souls? Adam, ye know, was the first man, the father of us all; we were in him as our root, and he in us as his seed; and his works, they are naturalized to us. We being in him as in the root, and he being in us as in his seed, his works are naturalized to us. It is natural to see and to hear and to speak, it is natural for a man to sin. Sometimes ye have a wicked man hating of a godly, gracious man, and he can give you no reason for it: I cannot tell why, saith he, but my heart is against him. But I will tell ye why, and what the reason is: The old man is in him, the old Adam is in him, and the work of Adam is naturalized to a wicked man, and he can give you no reason, many times, why he does so, because the work is naturalized to him. So on the contrary, the Lord Jesus Christ is our second Adam, and believers being in him as in their root, and he in them as in his seed; his works also are naturalized unto a believer in a great measure; that a believer, sometimes, his heart does stand unto the good work of God, and he can give you no reason for it; why I should love this or that godly man, I can give you no reason, but so it is, my heart stands towards him. The reason is this, because that Christ the second Adam is within, and so his work and things are naturalized unto the soul; and, in some measure, is it not so with you?

3. Whoever you are that make this objection, Did ye ever find, perceive, or think that Christ is in you? It may be now ye are under some present fear, doubting; but were you

never persuaded of this in-being; did ye never think, or were ye never persuaded that Christ was in you? Yes, sometimes I have, and sometimes I have not again: sometimes I do think that Christ is in me of a truth, and sometimes I do not. Then look into the xivth chapter of John, ye shall see what our Saviour promises. "I will pray the Father (at the 16th verse) and he shall give you another Comforter." And what then? He describes him, in the 17th verse. And at the 20th, says he, "At that day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me; and I in you." "At that day." It may be for the present you cannot say that Christ is in you, you in him, and he in you; but did ye never think yet in all your life that Christ was in you? Yes, once or twice, or sometimes, I confess I did think that Christ was in me; and I was strongly persuaded too that Christ was in me; but now I have lost those persuasions. But how came ye to be so persuaded at that time that Christ was in you? Thus it was with me, my heart was dead, hard, and I could not pray; I thought that God and mercy was gone, that I should never see the face of God again: and all on a sudden, when my soul was in this condition, I know not how, but all on a sudden, a strange and unspeakable comfort came unto my soul, and my soul stood up as it were from the dead, and then I had this persuasion that Christ was in me. Well, soul, be of good comfort, this was Christ's time, that was Christ's time; and though now for the present thou canst not say that Christ is in thee, I tell thee from the Lord that time shall come again, and Christ will send the Comforter again, and then shalt thou know that thou art in the Father, and Christ is in thee, and thou art in Jesus Christ; for what he said unto those disciples, he said unto other of the disciples, Wait but a little, and though I be absent for a little time, I will send the Comforter, and then shall ye know. Although you do not know now, yet there is a time when the Comforter shall come, and then shalt thou know that Christ is in thee, and thou art in Jesus Christ.

4. Although for the present you do not find those workings of Christ in you, and those powerful operations of the Spirit, which should argue this same in-being; yet do ye not find some workings of grace in your soul, according unto the place, room and station that you have in the body of Christ?

The soul ye know it is in the body, yet the soul does not put out such power in one member, as it puts forth in another; the soul does not act in one member, as it does in another; it does not put forth so much strength in the little finger, or in the thumb, as it puts forth in the arm. The soul does not act in the eye, as it acts in the mouth; neither does it act in the tongue, as it acts in the ear. Should the eye say, I have no soul in me, because I cannot speak like the tongue? Should the tongue say, I have no soul in me, because I cannot see like the eye? Should the ear say, I have no soul in me, because I cannot speak like the tongue? No, but the soul that is in the body, it gives according to the station and place of every member that is in the body. So now the Lord Christ, he gives out unto all his body. He is by his Spirit in the hearts of believers, but he does not give unto every believer alike; one believer hath one place in the body of Christ, and another believer hath another place in the body of Christ. But now I say to thee, observe what place, room and station thou hast in the body of Christ, and then tell me whether, aye or no, do not ye find some workings of grace, in some measure, suitable unto the place, room and station that ye have in the body of Christ? Yes, surely I cannot deny this, but there are some workings in my soul, according to the room and station that I have in the body of Christ; and this I can say, that when the Comforter came, then I did know that Christ was in me; and I can say this also, through grace, in some measure, the work and things of Christ are naturalized to me. They are the servants and retinue of Christ that do come in and go out unto my soul. The Lord knows I am never better than when I am speaking of Jesus Christ, and hearing from Jesus Christ. If so, soul, be of good comfort, though thou hast feared that Christ is not in thee, go in peace, thy faith hath made thee whole, and the Lord Jesus Christ is in thy soul: the Lord Christ that is thus really united unto each believer by his Spirit, is really in thy soul and in thy heart.

Suppose it be so, that the Lord Christ be in my soul indeed, What is my duty now that does flow from hence?

I answer, I am not able to tell ye what your duty is that does flow from hence, it is so great and so large; but in two or three words thus:

If Christ be in you of a truth: then why should the world be in you in its strength and power? I say, if Christ be in you of a truth, why should you meddle, either in regard of your soul and body, with any thing that may be unsavoury or distasteful to Jesus Christ? If a man have a guest in his house that he prizes highly; will he bring swine into his chamber; this were as much as to bid him begone. And if Christ be in you, and in you of a truth, will ye bring swine unto him; will ye bring lusts; will ye bring the world? You are the temples of the Holy Ghost; therefore why should ye not take heed of defiling these temples; what manner of men and women should we be in all holy conversation, if Christ be in us of a truth?

If Christ be in you of a truth, why then should ye not be contented with your condition whatever it be, yea, thankful for it, yea in some proportion thankful? I say, contented, thankful, and thankful in proportion. I know, a man that is made partaker of this great mercy, this in-being of Christ in the soul, can never be thankful in proportion unto the mercy received; but he may be thankful in proportion unto other mercies. You will be thankful to a man that gives you an hundred pounds; you will be more thankful to him that gives you a thousand pounds; you will be more thankful to him that gives you a thousand pounds a year: it may be you will say to him that gives you a thousand pounds, I can never be thankful enough to you: but yet you will be more thankful to him that gives you a thousand pounds a year. So here you can never be thankful enough in proportion to the mercy received, but you may be thankful in proportion to other mercies received. If the Lord had given you the whole world for your portion, you would have been thankful: now in that he hath given you his Son, and that Jesus Christ is really united unto you by his Spirit, and Christ really in your soul; he hath done more for you, than if he had given you all the whole world. And will ye be thankful for these outward things and not for this in-being of Christ in your souls? And yet, how many are there, that are sometimes blessing God, and shewing some kind of thankfulness for outward things; but as for this in-being of Christ in the soul, that they are strangers to, and the Lord knows they were never thankful for that, so much as for out-

ward things. But if Christ be in you of a truth; why should you not be contented with your condition whatever it be, yea, thankful for it, yea, thankful in proportion.

If Christ be in you of a truth, then why should you not venture upon any work or service for God, although it do lie beyond you, and beyond your strength, and expect large and great things from him? You say, sometimes, you would do such or such a thing for God; but you have no strength to do it. But if Christ be in you of a truth, and really united unto your soul, then surely you shall have strength enough, and you may expect large and great things from him. Therefore, venture upon work and service for God; yea, although they do lie beyond your present strength, be not unwilling thereunto, but expect great things from God, because Christ is really in you.

To end all, be exhorted to get a share in this great mercy that I have been speaking of, this in-being of Christ in the soul. It may be there are some, that can say, I have none of Christ in my soul, and I may speak truly; some that can say, I have an unclean heart within me, but I have no Christ within me; I have a wanton heart within me, but I have no Christ within me yet; I have a proud heart within me, but I have no Christ within me yet; I have a worldly heart within me, but I have no Christ within me yet; I have a blaspheming heart within me, but I have no Christ within me; I have a lying and deceitful heart within me, but I have no Christ within me to this day; Lord, I have no Christ within me, what shall I do? Others, it may be, that have indeed Christ within them, and they can say, Lord, I hope that I have Christ within me; but I do not find that I have room enough in my heart for such a guest: Lord, my soul is not enlarged enough for such a guest as Christ is; Lord, my soul is a poor narrow room, oh! that my soul were more enlarged: what shall I do to get my soul enlarged to give entertainment to such a guest as Christ is?

I shall speak to ye both from one Scripture, turn ye both to the xviith of John, and the last verse, says our Lord and Saviour Christ praying unto his Father, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." Mind the words. Here are these three things ob-

servable in them. First of all, Here ye have this doctrine that I have been speaking of all this while, Christ in each believer: "I in them." Secondly, That God the Father does love a believer, though not so much as Christ, yet with the same love that he loveth Christ: "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." Thirdly, That the way to procure this love, and this in-being is, to have the name of God declared: "And I have declared unto them thy name, and I will declare it." Why? "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." So, then, the way for to get this in-being is, to have the name of God declared unto poor souls. What is this name, the name of God the Father that Christ declares? It was the love of God; his free grace and love. Says Christ, "God so loved the world," &c., John iii. 16; and still Christ preached the love of God to poor lost man. This was the name of God that is declared. Now, then, do any of your souls complain, that you want this in-being of Christ in you; or that you have not room in your souls to entertain such a guest? Observe, where this name of God is declared and manifested, this free love of God is manifested and declared; and there set thy soul under the spout, under the declaration, under the manifestation of the name of God, and look upon it, as if Christ were there preaching and declaring the name of God to thy soul, and there Christ shall come in unto thee, and there thy poor narrowed and straitened soul shall be enlarged, and made more capacious for Jesus Christ.

Wherefore I beseech you, then, receive this word of exhortation; and let every soul go unto Jesus Christ, and say to this purpose: Lord Jesus, thy work is to declare the name of the Father to poor sinners, that so thou mayest be in them; now, O Lord, I am a poor sinner, Lord, declare the name of the Father to me; Lord, declare the name of the Father to me. I have a straitened heart, I have not room enough for thee in my soul; oh that it were enlarged for thee! now, therefore, declare this name of thy Father to me, that so the love wherewith thy Father hath loved thee, may be in me, and I in thee also. Thus, I say, go unto Jesus Christ. And study, study much this in-being of Christ in your souls: you that have it not, labour to get it; and you

that have this in-being, labour to be thankful for it, improve it, and get your souls more and more enlarged under it.

SERMON V.

"Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."
GAL. II. 20.

I INTEND at this time to speak on these words, "But Christ liveth in me;" wherein ye have these three things:

I. The in-being of Christ in a believer: "Christ in me."

II. The efficacy of this in-being: "Christ liveth in me."

III. The constancy thereof; he doth not stay for a night or two, but he liveth, or abideth in me.

Accordingly there are three notes or observations.

I. Christ is in each believer Christ is in every christian. For when he says, "I live, yet not I;" he personates a believer all along, speaks not in his own person, but in the person of a believer, one justified by faith alone.

II. That Christ liveth in all believers: "Christ liveth in me."

III. That Christ liveth more in believers than themselves do: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Christ hath a greater hand and stroke in the spiritual actions of believers than themselves have.

I have spoken of the former of these in another place and now I will speak unto the other: and therefore I shall put them both together, in one doctrine or observation, thus:

Christ doth so live in a believer, that he hath a greater hand and stroke in the spiritual actions of a believer, than a believer himself hath: Christ lives in a believer more than himself, as to his spiritual actions.

For the opening and clearing of this truth. First, I shall labour to shew you that Christ liveth in each believer. Secondly, That he hath a greater hand and stroke in the actions of his spiritual life than a believer hath himself.

First, That Christ liveth in each believer. A man liveth where he worketh, and stayeth, or abideth. A man doth not live where he lieth; he may come and stay for a day or two,

and yet not be said to live there: but where a man works, and stays, or abides, there he lives. Now both these you shall find Christ doth: the first in that known place the viith of John, the 38th verse: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." Where the Spirit of Christ is, there is Christ. And this is a promise made to all believers, more or less, to be fulfilled unto them; "Out of their bellies shall flow rivers of living water:" which is to be understood of the Spirit. So that the Spirit of Christ shall be in them, and be working in them. And as for the other, you know what is said in that xivth of John, and the 23rd verse: saith our Saviour there, "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." It is the same word that is used before for mansions: In my Father's house are many mansions. ver. 2. We will come and take up our mansions with him. And this was so received a principle in the apostle's time, that he says to the Corinthians, in the 1st epistle, iiird chapter, 16th verse, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" But if you look into the viiith chapter of the Romans, you shall see all proved together, verses 10, 11: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Here are three or four things observable. First, That Christ in you, and the Spirit in you, is all one. And therefore having said in the 10th verse, "If Christ be in you;" at the 11th verse he says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you." Again, you may observe here, that Christ in a believer, is not habitual grace only; for, saith he, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you." It was not faith or habitual grace that raised up Christ from the dead, but the Spirit of God himself. And, saith he, this Spirit "dwelleth in you." So that Christ in a believer, is not only the habit of grace, but the Spirit of Christ. And then, thirdly, ye may observe this too; that this Spirit is a

living Spirit, and dwelleth or abideth in a believer. For it is said twice here, that the Spirit dwelleth in you. So that plainly then, you see from the words, Christ dwells in every believer, Christ dwells in every christian, he liveth in him.

And if it were not so, how should the absence of Jesus Christ be recompensed by the coming of the Spirit, or of the Comforter? When our Lord and Saviour Christ left the world and his disciples, he gave them a gracious promise of sending his Spirit: "And if I go not (saith he) the Spirit or the Comforter will not come: but if I go, I will send the Comforter, and he shall make up your loss of me," John xvi. 7. Now if that the Spirit of Christ should not be in a believer, and live in him; how would the coming of the Holy Ghost, and of the Spirit, make up the loss of the personal presence of Jesus Christ?

Besides, you know that friends love to be near unto one another; and the nearer they are, the happier they count themselves; they love not to be asunder: the soul of the lover liveth where it loveth, rather than where it liveth. Now there is the greatest friendship between Christ and a believer, and the Lord Jesus Christ hath a happiness above all friends, that he can make himself nearer, and be more one with his friends, than any friend in the world can. And, therefore, upon those terms of love and friendship, Christ by his Spirit liveth in all believers.

It will be said, If Christ liveth in all believers, really liveth in them by his Spirit, then what need of ordinances; for Christ, and the Spirit of Christ in me, can live without ordinances: and if a man have attained once unto the Spirit, Christ in him, and Christ living in him; and have attained unto the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ really living in him; what need of any commandments without, or rules without; for the Spirit will be a sufficient rule to lead him into all that is right: what need, therefore, of any commandments, rules or ordinances without?

I answer, Yes; for we use the ordinances, not only for the enjoyment of God in them, but as a testimony of our obedience. If that the enjoyment of God and Christ, were the only reason of the ordinances, then in case that a man could without the ordinances have the enjoyment of God and Christ, he might lay by the ordinances: but seeing that we

are for to use the ordinances as an act of our obedience, although a man can enjoy Christ, have the Spirit, and Christ living in him; yet notwithstanding, he is still to bear up the ordinances, because there he is to express his obedience unto God and Christ. And now give me leave a little to fix here, to take off this scruple, and objection, if you look into the xxviith of Numbers, you shall find that Joshua had the Spirit, and not in an ordinary way, but in a more than ordinary way the Lord gave Joshua his Spirit; and yet notwithstanding, Joshua was to be under commandments, and under ordinances: at the 18th verse. "The Lord said unto Moses, take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand on him, and set him before Eleazer the priest, and before all the congregation: and give him a charge in their sight." Mark, he was to come under a command, and under a charge although he had the Spirit. "And he shall stand before Eleazer the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord. And so it was. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him." Now Joshua doth not say, What need I go to Eleazer, or to the priest; what need I go and consult by Urim and Thummim? for I have the Spirit, that is able to lead me into all truth. No, but he submits unto his charge, and he waits upon the Lord in this way of the ordinances, although it is said here, that he had the Spirit. So, had not David the Spirit in a great measure; and yet, did he not use the ordinances? But look into the New Testament, and there you find that the apostles had the Spirit also: our Lord and Saviour Christ, he breathed upon them; they waited for the coming of the Spirit: and the Holy Ghost fell upon them; and yet notwithstanding, they were under commands; for saith our Saviour Christ to them, "Go teach all nations, baptizing and teaching them to do whatever I command you." Matt. xxviii. 19. So that although they had the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost, in a greater measure than any man, for aught I know, ever had since; yet notwithstanding, they were under commandments: "Teaching them, saith he, to do whatsoever I command you." And ye know what our Saviour says, in that place I mentioned even now, "He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, which he spake concerning the Spirit

and the Holy Ghost that should be given, for he was not yet glorified." John vii. 38, 39. A promise made to believers, and the churches, in the times of the apostles; they had the Spirit by virtue of that promise: and yet notwithstanding, they were under ordinances, and did use the ordinances. But that you may see how this objection runs cross, both to the Old and to the New Testaments; look upon one place more; it is in the xxxth chapter of Isaiah, the 20th and 21st verses, a promise made concerning the times of the gospel. "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." Here are ordinances, here are teachers. Well now, but where is the Spirit? Verse the 21st. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee; who speaks that word? Look into the ist chapter of the Revelation, and there you shall find, it is the Spirit that speaks the word behind one; at the 10th verse: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice." So that this voice behind, is that of the Spirit; when we do not expect the Spirit, the Spirit cometh and speaketh to us. So that thus now ye see, teaching, and ordinances, and the Spirit of Christ in us, and living in us, may and do stand together.

But yet will some say, What need of these things; if Christ liveth in each believer really by his Spirit, what need of commandments, or teaching without; for is it not said, Ye shall be all taught of God; and ye shall no longer teach your neighbour; is it not so said in Scripture?

No, not just so: for if you look into that xxxist of Jeremiah from whence the place is fetched: and the viiith chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews; ye shall find that the words runs thus: "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel (verse the 10th) after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." Mark how the words run: it is not barely said

thus: "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother;" but that clause is added to it, saying, Know the Lord: they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. As if he had said, I will now make a covenant of grace and mercy with you; I will write my laws in your hearts, and ye shall all know me, and though you have been taught heretofore as ignorant people, that have not known the Lord, yet now, because I will write my laws in your hearts, and my laws shall be there; ye shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, as if ye were ignorant, but my law shall be within your hearts, and you shall be taught as a knowing people.

Ye must know that although the Spirit of Christ live in every christian, and so God; yet the Spirit is the free gift of God, and therefore it acts and works no further than it pleaseth God to give it. Now look into the Scripture, and you shall find, that the Lord was never pleased to give the Spirit for this end, that it should be the only rule of a man's life; but for this end, that it should be an help to a man to know the rule, and to keep the rule. Look into the word and you shall find that the Spirit of the Lord was never given, to be the only rule for a man to live by, but it was given to be an help to understand, keep and fulfil the rule. And therefore Chrysostom doth well observe, it is with Christ in us, saith he, as with Christ without us. In the times of the Old Testament, the great promise was of giving Christ: in the times of the New Testament, the great promise is, the giving of the Spirit. Now, therefore, look as it was with Christ when he came into the world, so with the Spirit when he cometh into the heart, Christ with us. Now when Christ came into the world, he came not to destroy the law, but he came to fulfil the law: so when the Spirit cometh into the heart, the Spirit cometh not to destroy the gospel, or the ordinances of the gospel; but he comes to fulfil the gospel. *Christus impletio legis, Spiritus impletio Evangelii.* Christ the fulfilling of the law, the Spirit the fulfilling of the gospel. *Quæcunque sunt in lege, &c.* Whatsoever things are in the law, Christ fulfilleth: whatsover things are in the doctrine of the gospel, the Spirit fulfilleth. And as when Christ came, he came

not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; for he saith himself, "I came to fulfil the law," Matt. v. 17, so when the Spirit comes unto any soul, saith the Spirit also, I come not to destroy the gospel, or the commandments of the gospel; but I come into this poor soul, to help it to fulfil the commandments of the gospel. Now when I do take away the commandments, and make the commandments no commandments to me, I mean the commandments without, then I destroy the commandments as to me; when I do make the ordinances of Christ, as no ordinances to me; then I do destroy them, as to me: and when I make the rule without, to be no rule as to me, then I destroy it, as to me: and when I, that am a believer say thus, I have the Spirit, and therefore I have no need of any commandment from without, for the Spirit is rule enough; here I take away the commandment, as to me; I take away the ordinances, as to me; I take away the rule as to me, and therefore I destroy them. Certainly, Christ within us, is not contrary to Christ without us: Christ without us, did not destroy the law; Christ within us, doth not destroy the gospel. Therefore, for any now to throw up ordinances upon this account, because they have the Spirit to lead, and guide them; this is to walk contrary to all the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament. Oh! that people would think of this one thing, the Spirit was never given to be the only rule of a man's life; but it was given to help us to understand, and to enable us to keep the rule. Thus you see, ordinances, and Christ living in a christian, can stand together. And so you have the first thing cleared and proved, Christ liveth in all believers.

Secondly, Whereby may it appear that the Lord Jesus Christ doth so live in a believer, as that he hath a greater hand, and stroke in all the actions of his spiritual life than a believer hath himself; that Jesus Christ doth live more in a believer than himself doth?

The Scripture is very plain. If ye look into the ist chapter of Paul to the Ephesians, and the last verse, there you find these words, speaking of Christ and his church, "Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Our understandings, our wills, our affections, our duties, they are but empty vessels till Christ doth fill them, he filleth all, he filleth all in all. If ye have any sails spread in

any duty, it is Christ that filleth them. Look into the iiird chapter of that Epistle to the Colossians, ye shall find that at the 11th verse it is said of Christ, He is all in all. The words are, "But Christ is all, and in all." He is all in all men; so it may be read: or, he is all in all things. Either way it may be read and it signifies both, he is all in all men, and he is all in all things. Take the last all, for all men; and so he is all in all them. Take the last all, for all things; and so he is all in all them, in all things. Now if the Lord Jesus Christ be all in all things, and all in all men; then certainly, he hath a greater hand and stroke in the actions, the spiritual actions of believers, than themselves have.

To make this clear to you by instances, thus: if the Lord Jesus Christ have a greater hand and stroke in our conversion, in our performance of duties, in our obedience, in the grace of our sufferings, in our assurance, than we, or believers have themselves, then, certainly, this part of the doctrine must stand clear and firm.

As for our conversion: ye know what our Saviour says, "None come unto the Son, but whom the Father draws: and none know the Father, but he unto whom the Son reveals him." Matt. x. 22. Convert me, saith the turning soul, and I shall be converted.

As for our performances, or duties; prayer, or whatever it is, look into the viiith chapter to the Romans, and the 26th verse, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." But how doth this prove that the Spirit hath a greater hand and stroke in our prayers than ourselves have? Mark what follows, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered."

As for the matter of our obedience. You know what the apostle saith, both unto the Romans, and unto the Galatians, That we are led by the Spirit: believers are led by the Spirit. *Plus est agi, quam regi.* He doth not say, We are ruled by the Spirit, but he saith, a believer is led by the Spirit; not ruled, but led. It is more to be led than to be ruled: for when a man is ruled by another, he acts himself, and his own actions are seen: but when a man is led, and carried away by another, though he may act himself, the other's

action is more seen than his. We, saith he, are led by the Spirit.

As for our grace in suffering; the deportment and demeanour of a gracious soul in the time of suffering, see what our Saviour Christ says for that, in the xth of Matthew 19th and 20th verses: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." So that he hath a greater stroke in the grace and carriage of a soul under his sufferings than himself hath.

As for the matter of our assurance. You know also what the apostle Paul saith, in that same viiith of the Romans, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." So that now all these five things are clear. And if the Spirit and Christ in a believer, the Spirit of Christ, have a greater stroke in a man's conversion, in his performance, in his obedience, in the grace of his suffering, and in his assurance, than himself hath: then surely, the Lord Jesus Christ hath a greater hand and stroke in spiritual actions of believers, than themselves have; now that is proved.

To give you one reason for it. If a believer had a greater hand and stroke in his spiritual actions, than the Spirit of Christ; then had he whereon to boast: for he might say thus: I have now been at duty; I confess I have had some help from Christ, and from the Spirit; but I had the greatest hand and stroke therein myself, and therefore why should I not boast? I have been now at prayer, and though I have had some help from the Spirit in prayer, yet I had the greatest hand and stroke therein myself, therefore why should I not boast? But, saith the apostle, boasting is excluded: surely therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ doth so live in a christian, as that he hath a greater hand and stroke, in all the actions of his spiritual life, than a christian, or a believer hath himself; so that he may say truly, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

If this be true; surely there are few believers in the world; how few are there in whom Christ lives thus? I

fear upon this account, will some poor soul say, that I have no faith in Jesus Christ: I thought once that I had faith in Christ, and that I was a believer, but I do not find Christ living in me thus, that the Lord Jesus hath a greater hand and stroke, in all my duties than myself, and therefore I fear that I never yet had faith: are there not few believers in the world upon this account?

I grant it, there are few believers in the world, few that have faith, few in whom Christ lives thus. But that this doctrine may not be a stone of stumbling to any weak christian, you must know this: That it is with Christ in us, living in us, as it was with Christ without us, living without us. When the Lord Christ came into the world, and lived here on earth, lived without us: he lived a conflicting life, a life under temptations, and freedom from those temptations; desertions, and freedom from those desertions: his life here on earth was a hidden life, a veiled life; "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," John i. 11; and knew him not: his own would not say, Now our Lord Christ is among us. So when Christ comes into the soul by his Spirit, when he lives there, he lives a conflicting life: he hath his temptations there, and his freedom from those temptations; he hath his desertions there, and his freedom from those desertions: he liveth a hidden life there, a veiled life there; he comes to his own, and many times the soul that is his own, doth not receive him in a way of comfort, is not able to say, Christ liveth in me. But whoever you are that make this objection, or lie under this fear; give me leave to propound four or five questions to you.

1. What is that in you, that doth ordinarily sway the great actions of your lives? When the Lord Christ comes into the soul, he comes as a king, presently ascendeth the throne, and takes hold of the scepter; interests himself in all that doth sway the soul, and sways the actions of the soul: now what is it that doth sway a man's actions? *Finis actionis domina et regina est.* The end sways the action. And look what that is that doth sway your end, that is it which liveth in you; if self swayeth your end, self liveth in you; if Christ sway your end, Christ liveth in you. Now, soul, take all the actions of thy life, since thou hast set thy face towards hea-

ven, and as for the great turnings of your life, and the great actions, hath not Christ been at the end of them?

2. Do you not find a secret kind of disposition unto all the commandments of the gospel? Where the Spirit is, there Christ liveth. When the Lord makes a covenant of grace, you shall observe he promiseth, that he will give his Spirit, and withal that he will write his law in our hearts: and when he promiseth in the covenant of grace, that he will write his law in our hearts, he doth also promise for to give his Spirit. As when the Lord gave out the law at first to mankind, he did write the moral law in man's heart: so that the heathen now have the law written in their hearts, the moral law; whereby they are disposed and inclined to morality and civility: so when the Lord comes and makes a covenant of grace with the soul, then he doth give out his Spirit to the soul, and then he doth write his law, the law of grace, love and of the gospel, in that soul, and that soul hath a secret disposition unto all the commandments of the gospel. Now do you not find it thus with you? when sometimes you are tempted to what is evil, do not ye say thus, I cannot do it; O Lord, thou knowest I cannot live as I have done, and I cannot want the presence of God and Christ. What means this cannot, but a law within, that God hath written in the heart; there is the Spirit, and there is Christ?

3. Do not you find your souls sometimes carried out to what is good, beyond and contrary to your own dispositions and natural inclinations? It is written of Trajan the Emperor, that he was an exceeding meek, loving, quiet, good natured man; and yet he was one of the greatest persecutors in the primitive times, he had his hand in as bloody actions against the saints, as any persecutor in those times: yet a man of a quiet, loving, sweet nature and disposition. How came this to pass? He was acted by Satan, and being thus acted beyond his own disposition and inclination, it argued that Satan had a greater hand and stroke in his action than himself had. So, when a man shall be carried on to what is good, even contrary to his own nature and disposition, what doth this argue, but that the Lord Christ hath a greater hand and stroke in that action than himself hath.

. Do not you find, sometimes, whoever you are that make this objection, or lie under this fear, that Christ doth

not live in you; do not you find, that sometimes your soul is carried out to what is good, beyond what you intended? When Zaccheus went up into the sycamore-tree, he only went up to see the outside of Christ; but he comes down, receives Christ into his house, there he bids him welcome and saith, "Lord, behold the half of my goods I give to the poor," Luke xix. 8. Zaccheus never intended this when he went up to see Christ: what is the reason? The Lord Christ was upon his soul, the Lord Christ at work upon him; and because he was carried out farther in this good work than ever he intended, it thereby doth appear, that the Lord Jesus Christ had a greater stroke in this spiritual action of his than himself had. As on the other side, a wicked man sometimes he begins to sin; and saith he within himself, I will do it but a little, I will not go very far, I will never do it again, I will now take my leave of this sin, it shall never be acted by me any more. But he goes farther in it than ever he intended; Why? because the devil hath a greater stroke upon him than himself hath. So here, when as a man's soul shall be carried out unto what is good beyond what he intended, this argues that the Lord Jesus Christ is at work upon his soul, and hath a greater hand and stroke upon his actions, his spiritual actions than himself hath. Now is it not thus with thee?

5. Whoever thou art, man or woman, that makes this objection, and lies under this fear, that the Lord Christ doth not live in thee; were you never persuaded of this, did you never yet think, that Christ was in you; did you never yet believe that Christ lived in you? Yes, I confess I had such thoughts once; but oh, I have lost those thoughts, I have lost those persuasions. But when you had those thoughts, and when you had those persuasions, how came you by them? My soul was lying in a sad, dark, dead, hardened condition; my soul was ready to sink with despair: and all on a sudden, my soul was raised up within me to this persuasion, for to think that Christ was in me, and that Christ liveth in me. Well, either these thoughts were from Satan, or from Christ; either this persuasion of yours was from Satan, or it was from Christ: not from Satan, for Satan doth not use to be so loving to a poor tempted soul, to bear it up when it is ready to sink under temptation; Satan doth

not use to be so loving to a poor soul to free it from despair: then it was from Christ; and if it were from Jesus Christ, then Christ had a greater hand and stroke in this persuasion than thy own soul; for thou sayest, I was dead, dull, hardened, ready to sink; and I said, Mercy is gone, I shall never see the face of Christ again; and all on a sudden these persuasions were raised in me. Here Christ plainly hath a greater stroke in this persuasion than thy own soul.

Upon all this I do now appeal unto you, whoever you are that lie under any of these fears, hath it not been thus with you, that all on a sudden you have been raised to these persuasions? Do not you find that sometimes your soul hath been carried out to God, even contrary to your own inclination and disposition? Do not you find that sometimes your soul hath been carried out to what is good, beyond all that you intend; you thought to begin prayer a little while, and hath not the Lord sometimes come in, and carried out your soul farther than ever you intended? Do you not find a secret disposition or inclination to all the commandments of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you not find that in the greatest actions and turnings of your lives, Christ hath been at the end thereof? Oh yes, if I should speak true I must needs say this, Although I have not seen Christ at the end of every action, yet as for the great actions and turnings of my life, I must needs say Christ hath been there. And the Lord knows I have a secret disposition to the commandments of the gospel. And, O Lord, thou knowest that I have been carried out many times to what is good, contrary to mine own disposition. O Lord, thou knowest I have been carried further in a way of good than ever I intended. O Lord, thou knowest when my soul hath been dead, hardened, and I have said, Now mercy is gone, and I am driven from mercy; then, then hath there been persuasions raised in me, that Jesus Christ is in me. Well, be of good comfort, soul, be of good comfort from the Lord. If thou hast these persuasions, do not check them; and if for the present you have not these persuasions, yet wait on the Lord, for our Saviour Christ hath said, "I will send the Comforter; and in that day ye shall know, that I am in you, and you in me," John xiv. 20: and therefore wait upon Christ for that day.

Suppose this doctrine be true, that Christ liveth in all believers; that he hath a greater hand and stroke in the actions, the spiritual actions of believers, than themselves have; what conclusions or practical meditations shall we draw from hence?

I will name some and lay them before you; carry them home with you.

If these things be true, then may every one say, Now I see that the in-being of Christ in the soul, is not a mere fancy, a mere notion, but carries with it the greatest reality in the world. For when Christ is in a believer, there he lives, acts and works: yea, and he hath a greater stroke in the spiritual actions of believers than themselves have. Surely therefore, this in-being of Christ in the soul, is a work of power, of almighty power, the same power that raised up Christ from the dead.

If these things be true, then here may a man say, I see a great and vast difference between a godly and a wicked man. Take a wicked man, and though he be never so great or rich, yet Satan is in him, Satan liveth in him and ruleth in him; the prince of the air ruleth in him, and he is taken captive by the devil at his will. But now take a godly man, and though he be never so poor and mean, yet Christ is in him, Christ liveth in him, Christ hath a greater hand and stroke in his actions than himself hath. Take a wicked man of the highest form, and though he do pray, hear, read, confer or speak of good things, yet not Christ, but himself works and acts in him; self worketh and acteth him. But take a godly man, and though he be never so weak, Christ liveth in him, and hath a greater hand in his actions than himself. Who would not be godly, who would not get into Jesus Christ?

If these things be true, what desperate madness is it for any to oppose the saints and children of God, especially for the matter of their religion and gracious actions? It is opposition done unto Christ himself. Christ liveth in them. And the Lord Christ doth so live in a gracious man, a believer, as he hath a greater stroke in all his prayers and in all his duties than himself hath. Then for a man to stand and scorn, scoff and jeer at the prayers, duties and gracious actions of a believer, what is it, but to make opposition to

Christ himself? If there be ever an opposer, a scorner in this congregation, Poor soul! where wilt thou appear in the great day?

If all these things be true, then may every believer say, Now I see what a great evil it is for any child of God to say that his duties are nothing but hypocrisy, or the work of Christ hypocrisy. Do ye look upon the work of Jesus Christ as so vile and base? nothing more base in your eye than hypocrisy. If Christ be in me, he liveth in me, he hath a greater hand and stroke in all my spiritual actions than myself hath. Therefore, through the grace of God, I will be for ever wary how I say of my own duties again, they are all nothing but vile hypocrisy.

If these things be true, then here now I see the reason why a believer is and ought to be thankful to God for all those things that he doth to God and for God; not only thankful for what he receiveth from God, but thankful for what himself doth offer unto God. We read of David, that when he and his people had offered a great offering, he praiseth the Lord for his own willingness to offer unto the Lord. So a believer is not only to be thankful for what he receiveth from God, but also for what he himself doth do to God and for God. Why? Because it is not he that doth it, but Christ living in him; and the Lord Christ hath a greater stroke in that action which he doth to God, or for God, than himself hath. Therefore infinite reason why we should not only be thankful for what we receive from God, but for what we do to and for God.

If all this be true, then here we see a mighty engagement for every poor believer to come unto duty, although his heart be dead, dull, heavy and indisposed unto it; because it is not he, but Christ worketh in him in duty. Am I therefore dead, dull, heavy and indisposed to prayer or any duty; yet will I go and offer myself unto God in prayer. Either Jesus Christ will come down upon my prayer, God will come down in my duty, or else he will not. If the Lord do, what a mercy shall it be unto me. If the Lord do not come down while I am at duty, and work all my work for me, it shall be my affliction, and I will mourn after God. But whether the Lord does come down in my duty, or whether he does not, it is as it pleaseth him; I will wait upon the Lord, for it is he that worketh in us mightily. Oh, my soul,

therefore for ever wait upon God in duty, yea, although my heart be hard, dead, dull and indisposed thereunto.

If all this be true, what gracious, holy, heavenly lives should all those lead that pretend to the word, believer. Some there are that do pretend to the word, believer—I am a believer; and they say they have faith. But if I have faith indeed, then Christ liveth in me: not the world liveth in me, but Christ liveth in me; not malice liveth in me, but Christ liveth in me; not pride liveth in me, but Christ liveth in me. But how many are there, poor souls, that may say in truth, Pride liveth in me, and malice liveth in me, and the world liveth in me, but Christ liveth not in me. And will ye say then, that ye have faith? Let us not be deceived. But if this be true, that Christ liveth in all believers, what gracious and holy conversations should the conversations of believers be; and whensoever you fail in any thing, you should even say, Yea, but would Christ do so? My soul, thus and thus hast thou spoken, but would Christ have spoken thus and thus?

If all this be true, why should we not all stand, wonder, and admire at the infinite love of Christ? It was much love in Christ, for to come down into our nature; it was yet more for to come down into our hearts by his Spirit; yet more for to live, act and work there: but the Lord Christ, he is not only come down into our nature, come down into our hearts, for to live, act and work there: but the Lord Christ hath an eye upon all our actions, the Lord Christ hath a greater stroke in all our spiritual actions than ourselves have; he is at the beginning, and he is at the middle, and he is at the latter end of every action. Had the Lord Christ only given himself for us, what a great mercy had it been; but he hath given himself *to* us, not only *for* us, but *to* us; he cometh and liveth in a believer: he liveth more in a believer, than a believer doth himself. What love, mercy and grace is here! You that are believers, do you know your own privilege? What is it to have Christ living in you? Only hear the word of exhortation, you that are made partakers of this great privilege, Christ living in you: "Christ in you the hope of glory," Col. i. 27. Labour now to hold forth the virtues of Jesus Christ in your lives. And when ye have done all, then walk humbly, walk humbly with your God,

and say as Paul here of the true believer, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." I have been now at prayer, yet not I, but Christ prayed in me: I have been now at conference, and spoke such and such good words; yet not I, but Christ worketh in me, speaketh in me. Upon this account let us all labour to walk humbly with our God, for it is Christ more than you, Christ hath a greater stroke in all your actions than yourselves have; therefore now let every man say, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

SCRIPTURE LIGHT

THE

MOST SURE LIGHT:

COMPARED WITH

1.—REVELATIONS AND VISIONS. 2.—NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL DREAMS. 3.—IMPRESSIONS WITH AND WITHOUT THE WORD. 4.—LIGHT AND LAW WITHIN. 5.—DIVINE PROVIDENCE. 6.—CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. 7.—HUMAN REASON. 8.—JUDICIAL ASTROLOGY.

IN

THREE SERMONS.

SCRIPTURE LIGHT THE MOST SURE LIGHT.

SERMON I.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Peter i. 19.

In these words, ye have an exhortation to a great duty, namely, attention, or taking heed to the word of God in dark and dangerous times and places. The duty is commanded and commended: "Ye do well that ye take heed," καλως ποιειτε, ye do well, or beautifully; this is your christian beauty and comeliness in the eyes of God. Now this duty is urged and amplified; urged by divers arguments: some taken from the excellency of the word itself. First, It is λογος προφητικος, a word of prophecy, or a prophetical word, written by divine inspiration; the same that is spoken of in verse 20, called prophecy of Scripture. Secondly, It is λογος βεβαιοτερος, a more sure word. Some think the comparative is put for the superlative, as Acts xxv. 10, ως κἀ συ καλλιον επιγινωσκεις, as thou very well, or best knowest: but I take it rather to be meant comparatively; for the word of God written, is surer than that voice which they heard in the mount, whereof he spake in the former verse. More sure is the word written, than that voice of revelation; not *ratione veritatis*, not in regard of the truth uttered, for that voice was as true as any word in the Scripture; but more sure, *ratione manifestationis*, more certain, settled and established. Secondly, Some arguments are taken from the usefulness of the word to us; for it is as a light shining in a dark place, and therefore it is good for us to take heed thereunto. But how long must we take heed to it? Even as long as we live, and whilst we are in the dark especially, even until the day dawn, and the sun shine in his full strength and brightness in your hearts; which is the second thing whereby this duty is amplified.

Some think that it is to be understood of a supernatural

revelation and light which God doth set up in the soul, which when a man hath obtained, then he is to take heed to the written word no longer; but that cannot be, 1. Because the apostle doth here prefer the written word before a revelation from heaven: now if he do prefer it before a divine revelation, then it is not to give place to the dawning of some special light and revelation in the heart; for then he should destroy in the latter part of the verse, what he had affirmed and built up in the former part. 2. One Scripture is to be explained by another; but Isa. viii. 20, the Lord saith, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light (or morning) in them:" if therefore any man do pretend light, or the shining of the morning star in his soul, so as to lay by the word written, that light is no true light; and so this interpretation can be no true interpretation of these words. 3. This interpretation doth suppose, that the morning star did not shine in the apostles' time, and that then the apostles, with the saints of those times, had not this light within them; for the apostle saith, "We have a more sure word, and ye do well that ye take heed thereunto." All the saints and people of God, then, did walk by, and take heed unto the written word; yet they had light within them. This interpretation, therefore, is contrary to the sense of the apostle here.

Others think that these words are spoken to the believing Jews, in reference to the prophets of the Old Testament; as if the apostle should say, The glorious light of the gospel hath not yet fully conquered your hearts; and therefore until your gospel light be more clear, you shall do well to take heed to the prophets of the Old Testament, who do all testify with us of Christ. But this will seem to argue, that when gospel light doth more fully rise upon us, then we may lay by the prophets of the Old Testament.

Others think that this day dawning, and the day star arising, doth note that full and clear vision of God and Christ which is yet to come. Now, because the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, in the latter days, in respect to which time it is promised, Rev. ii. 28, "I will give him the morning star;" and in chap. xxii. 16, Christ doth appear to the saints under that title, saying, "I am the bright and morning star."

Therefore it is conceived by some, that the apostle here doth relate to that time, and so the sense of the words should be this: Though now ye be in the dark, yet ye have the light of the Scripture to walk by; whereto ye shall do well that ye take heed, until ye be brought to, and under a more glorious and clear dispensation. But the word used for the morning star, Rev. ii. 22, is not the same that is here used, and translated the day star.

The Scripture shall not be out of date in the days of those glorious times; for the walls of that city, the new Jerusalem, which shall come down from heaven, hath twelve foundations, and in them, the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Rev. xxi. 14.

This interpretation doth suppose that the morning star, or the sun, for so the word may be rendered, as Suidas saith, *Φωσφορος ο το φως αναλελλων, ο ηλιος*, doth not shine in our hearts now, and that it hath not shined already, whereas it is said, Luke i. concerning Christ's first coming, verse 78, "Whereby the Day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness," &c. And the apostle Paul saith, The day is far spent; and ye are the children of light and of the day. Surely, therefore, the day had then dawned in those times; and therefore these words cannot only relate to the glorious times that are yet to come.

Others say these words do relate unto heavenly glory; and so the meaning of the words should be, That we are to take heed unto the written word, until we come into heaven; which thing is true: but where do we find in Scripture, that the glory of heaven is said thus to dawn, or shine in our hearts; or that Christ is said thus to shine in our hearts, in regard of heavenly glory?

Therefore I think the word *until*, is not to be taken exclusively, but as in other scriptures; Psalm cx. "Sit thou on my right-hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Shall Christ sit on God's right-hand no longer? Shall he not sit there for ever? Yea, he shall sit there for ever, after all enemies are subdued. But the words shew what Christ shall enjoy and do whilst the enemies rage; he shall sit in power, judging, on the right-hand of God; not that he shall not sit there when they are subdued. So here, "Ye do well (saith the apostle) that ye take heed to the word, until the

day dawn, and the day star arise, and shine in your hearts;" that is, until ye have more clear light; not that ye lay by the word then, but because ye are now in the dark, I will tell you, says the apostle, what ye shall do whilst ye are in the dark, even take heed to the word written. And so the doctrine from the whole verse is this:

Scripture light is our great and most sure light, whereunto we shall do well that we take heed, and that especially in our dark times and places.

For the opening and prosecuting whereof, four things will fall under your consideration:

First, That a good man may be in the dark, in a dark place, state and condition.

Secondly, Though he be in the dark, yet God hath not left him without Scripture light to walk by.

Thirdly, This Scripture light is the most excellent, safe and sure light.

Fourthly, It is the duty of all the saints to take heed thereunto, and to walk thereby, and that especially in their dark times and places.

First, It is possible that a good man may be in the dark, on a dark ground, and in a dark condition; yea, possibly a man may truly fear the Lord, yet he may walk in the dark, and see no light of comfort. Isa. l. 10. Doth not the church complain in the Lamentations, saying, "He hath set me in dark places?" chap. iii. 6. Was not David in the dark, when he said, "The Lord will lighten my darkness?" 2 Sam. xxii. 29. Was not Job in the dark, when he said, "The Lord hath set darkness in my paths," Job xix. 8; and when he said, "I waited for light, and there came darkness?" chap. xxx. 26. And was not Heman in the dark, when he said, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit in darkness?" Ps. lxxxviii. 6. Yea, was not Christ himself in the dark, when the hour and power of darkness came upon him? Luke xxii. 53. Surely, therefore, it is possible that a good man may be in the dark, upon dark ground, and in a dark condition; and it must needs be so: for,

A good man may live and dwell in a place or town where no means of grace are; in a poor, dark and ignorant corner of the world. Did not Job dwell in the land of Uz? And when David thirsted after ordinances, saying, "My soul

thirsteth after thee, O God, to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary," Psalm lxiii. 1, 2, was he not then in such a dark corner as I now speak of? The title of the Psalm tells us, that he was in the wilderness of Judah: and if ye look into 1 Sam. xxvi. ye shall find him complaining thus: "They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods," verse 19. Such a dark place was Capernaum, and Galilee, by the way of the sea, Galilee of the gentiles, where, Matt. iv. 16, it is said, "The people sat in darkness and in the shadow of death;" yet here did Peter and Andrew dwell, when our Saviour called them to follow him: there did James and John dwell likewise. And as a wicked man may live under the means, and the light shine on him, though he comprehend it not; so it may be the lot and portion of a good man to live, and dwell, and be in a town, or place, or parish, where there is no means and no light shining.

As he may live and dwell in such a place as this, so he may be in some great affliction and persecution; "for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty:" persecuting times are dark times. When do beasts go forth to their prey? but in the night. And when are thieves bold? but in the night. In times of persecution, the enemies of God's people are very bold, and those beasts do go forth to their prey. Surely, therefore, this time is a dark time with the saints.

If a good man may be in such straits, as for the present he doth not see his way before him; then he may be in the dark. Thus it was with Joseph when Mary was first with child; he did not know what to do in the case, until the angel of the Lord appeared to him. Thus it was with David often, especially at Reilah, when he went down to Achish, feigned himself mad, changing his behaviour; and at Ziklag, when his wives and goods were taken from him, and his men thought of stoning him. John xii. 35, "He that walketh in darkness, knows not whither he goes," saith our Saviour. And when a man is in such straits, as that he doth not see his way, then he is in the dark indeed.

A good man may be much offended. Times of offences are dark times: "He that walketh in darkness stumbleth:" and so much as I do take offence, and am stumbled, so much

I am in the dark. Now possibly a good man may be much offended, and stumbled; though he be not offended at the good way of God, and power of godliness, nor at all the saints, yet he may be under much offence: "All you shall be offended (saith our Saviour to his disciples) because of me." And if a good man may be offended, then he may be in the dark, on a dark ground, and in a dark condition.

As a good man may be offended and stumbled, so he may stumble into some mistakes and errors; erroneous times are dark times: every error is darkness, as truth is light. Now a good man may err; for though he doth see much when his eyes are opened in his first conversion, yet every man doth not see all things; two, or three, or four may see, and have their eyes open, yet one may see further than another. God hath several truths for several ages and generations: as in a great house there are hangings for every room, and the hangings of this room are not fit for that, and the hangings of that are not fit for another; so God hath several hangings of truth, to furnish several generations; and those that are fit for this, are not fit for that: *Non nulla video non visa beato Augustino,* says Luther, *et rursum multa visuros scio, quæ ipse ego non video:* I see many things, said he, that were not seen to Austin; and those that come after me, shall see those things that I see not. Oh, saith Austin, there is such a depth in Scripture, that I do *multo plura nescire quam scire;* that I am ignorant of more things than I know. Ye see how it is in a room where there are many pictures; though ye see some of them presently, yet others have a silken curtain drawn before them, which ye see not immediately: so here, though God do reveal much unto you, yet there is a silken curtain that is still drawn before some truths, and therefore even a good man may be much mistaken. "The Lord hath hid this thing from me," said Elisha. 2 Kings iv. 27. And when David told Nathan that it was in his heart to build an house unto God; "Go, (said Nathan to him) and do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." Yet Nathan, though a prophet, was mistaken, and in an error; for the same night the Lord appeared to him, and told him that this work was reserved for another, not for David. Possibly, therefore, a good man may mistake, even in the things of God, and so be in the dark.

If a good man may be engaged in some division and dissention, then he may be in the dark. Dividing times are dark times; and possibly a great division and dissention may fall amongst good men. So great and sharp a division fell between Paul and Barnabas, that they forsook one another. I read of two good men, whom Epiphanius makes mention of, that were fellow-sufferers for the christian faith, εγενέσθην συν παροξυσμος; and being condemned, and sent to work in the metal mines, there fell so great a difference between them, that they drew a partition wall between them in the mine, and would not hold communion with each other, in the service of Christ, for which they both suffered. Cyprian doth impute the great sufferings and persecutions of the primitive times, unto the discord and dissention of brethren: *Imo vero nec venissent fratribus hæc mala si in unum fraternitas esset animata*, saith he, Epist. iv. lib. 4. Ye have heard of the difference between Chrysostom and Epiphanius, and of that between Jerome and Ruffinus, and of that between Ridley and Hooper. In Luther's time, the contest was so hot and great and violent, between him with his party, and Zuinglius, Oecolampadius and others, that though they met together with divers princes for reconciliation; and they did at that meeting draw up several articles of faith, wherein they did all agree, and whereto they did all subscribe; yet Luther would not call the Calvinists, brethren. And in these days of ours, what scuffling is there between brethren, fighting one with another. Why? but because they are in the dark. If brethren fight and scuffle one with another, who will not say they are in the dark?*

A good man may be under some desertion. God may withdraw from him; and when God withdraws, then he is in the dark. Desertion time is a dark time, and such a cloud as this may go over the heads of the best. Surely therefore it is possible that a very good man may be much in the dark.

* Cupio ex hac vita miguare ut liberater ab immunibus et implacabilibus odiis Theologorum. Melanch. Strigellius Melc. Adam.

Et vidi mare vitreum mixtum igni. Apoc. xv. 2.

Quid autem aliud ignis designet, a que serventis lites et contentiones flagrantes odiis! ignem veni missurus in teiram inquit Christus, &c. Hujusmodi ignis vagatur per totam Reformatum Ecclesiam quæ vel absumit plurimos vel molesta est reliquis dum restinguere nituntur. Brightm. in Apoc. xv. 404.

And if a good man may be under some temptation and sin, then he may be in the dark. Temptation time is a dark time. When a man cannot see his own hand, though he lift it up before his eyes, then he is in the dark indeed. Now possibly a good man may be in such a temptation, that he shall not be able to see the lifting-up of his own hand in prayer, saying, I go to prayer, but I cannot pray at all; and that which I do perform, it is no duty. Sometimes it is so with him, that he cannot read his own graces nor see them. Though the fish lie playing upon the water, and you may see them in a fair sunshine; yet in a storm or night ye see them not, though they be in the pond or river still. So here, though when the light of God's countenance doth shine upon the soul, he is then able to see and read his own graces; yet if it be a storm, or the night of temptation, he cannot see them. Why? Not because they are not in his heart and life as before, but because he is in the dark. Possibly therefore a good man may be in the dark, upon a dark ground, and in a dark condition. That is the first thing.

Secondly, Though a good man may be in the dark, yet he hath Scripture light to walk by. God hath not left him comfortless, and without light, in obscure darkness, as the wicked are: but he hath light within him, and that great light of the written word without. "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed (saith the apostle), as unto a light shining in a dark place." This Scripture light he hath always by him. "To the law and to the testimonies (saith the prophet Isaiah, chap. viii.), if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It is a dark time which the prophet speaks of, "For many shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken," verse 15. "The Lord hideth his face from the house of Jacob," verse 17. "Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and wonders in Israel," verse 18. "And they shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven to darkness," verse 22. Yet in this time they have the law and the testimony, that great Scripture light to walk by.

But have not even wicked men this light also of the Scripture, to walk by in their darkness?

I answer, They have it as a blind man hath the sun: the

sun is in the firmament over the head of a blind man, yet it is no light to him. So here.

And though a wicked man doth hear and may read the Scripture, and know many truths which are therein contained, yet he doth not know the greatness of them. A man may know and say, This is the sun, and this is the light thereof; yet not know the greatness of the sun, and that it is abundantly bigger than the earth. So a wicked man may and doth know many truths, but he doth not see and know the greatness of truths, for he prizeth other things of the world above them. A good man knows the truths of the gospel, and he sees the greatness of them, for he leaves all to follow them.

And though a wicked man may have his eyes open to see many truths of the Scripture, yet in seeing, he doth not see the same; for as a good man may know natural things in a spiritual way, so he doth know spiritual things in a natural way. A good man seeth the things themselves that are contained in the Scripture; and therefore it is that the knowledge of Christ, is called Christ: "Till Christ be formed in you," saith the apostle; that is, till the knowledge of Christ be formed. The thing is put for the knowledge of it. Why? Because in knowing, the saints know the things themselves. Wicked men know and have the notion of them; for there is a knowledge of things in the notion of them, which wicked men may have: and there is a knowledge of the things themselves, which the saints and people of God have.*

But may not a good man's eyes be held from this Scripture light?

Yes, in some things; but though his eyes be held, it is only *quo ad hoc*, as to this or that truth in particular. When he is converted and brought home to God, then are his eyes said to be opened, then is he anointed with the unction of the Holy One, and doth know all things necessary unto his salvation. Yet as Hagar's eyes though open, were held from

* Duplex est cognitio rei disciplinaris et intuitiva, disciplinaris est per auditum et narrationem solam intuitiva est illa quam ex re presenti et sensu percepta manantem habemus illam infideles et impii multi assequunter in ipsis fidei mysteriis hanc vero minime, ω γαρ μη πιρεα ταυτα τυφλες εςι μυωπιαζων. 2 Pet. i. 9.—Ames. de Lumine Naturæ et Gratiæ.

seeing the fountain of water that was by her, when she said, "I will not see the death of my child;" so a good man's eyes may be open, yet they may be held *quo ad hoc*, as to this or that truth or way: but though they be held, yet I say it is but *quo ad hoc*, not in regard of all.

Though a good man's eyes may be held from some part of this Scripture light; yet if he be in health, and not under some temptation and spiritual sickness, he doth not shut his own eyes against any Scripture light. A sick man will not endure the opening of the window or casement; but if a man be in health, Set open the window, saith he, that light may come in, though some smoke do come in withal; I will venture and hazard the smoke, for light I must have, and I cannot be without it. So, if a man be in health for his soul, he calls for the opening of the windows: possibly some errors and smoke may come in with light and truth; yet set the windows open, saith he: but if sickly and weak, he is so afraid of errors and smoke, that he dares not endure the means of further light, but even turns his back, and shuts his eyes against some Scripture light; but a good man in health doth not so.

Though a good man's eyes may be held from some Scripture light and truth, insomuch as he may be in the darkness of some ignorance, yet he knows more than he is able to utter, and he feels more than he can speak. A knowing, learned man, it may be, can utter more of the Scripture than he feels; but a good man feels more than he can utter.

And though some Scripture truths may be hidden from him sometimes, yet he hath his intervals of sight. As with a man in travel, when he comes upon such or such an hill or mountain, he sees the steeples and pinnacles of the town which he is going to; then he comes into a valley, and he loseth the sight of them again; then he comes again to another hill, and then he sees them again. So in our journey or travel to heaven, we see such and such truths to-day, then we come into a valley, and we lose the sight of them; then God raises our hearts again, and we see them again. Thus the saints have their intervals of sight.

And though a good man may be in the dark, yet God doth not leave him so. As it is in the darkness of fears, so in all other darkness. Ye read, Matt. xxviii, that when Christ

rose from the dead, the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre, and they that were about it were in great fear. There were keepers of the sepulchre, whom the Jews had set to watch the same; and there were the godly women, waiting for the resurrection: both were in fear, and in great fear. But the angel appears to Mary and the good women, saying, "Fear not ye;" ye seek Jesus, he is risen, he is not here, fear not ye. He did not say so to the wicked soldiers that kept and watched the sepulchre; they feared, and he left them in their fears, and in their dark condition. But the good women feared, and were in a dark condition; but the Lord did not leave them in it, but gave them Scripture light to comfort them: "He is risen, as he said." So that a good man may be in the dark, yet God will not leave him in his darkness, but even then he hath a light, and a sure light to walk by. And that is the second thing.

Thirdly, This Scripture light is the most excellent, safe and sure light: it is the light of lights; the most excellent light of all under God in Christ. For,

It is a true light. There are many false lights in the world, but Scripture light is the true light. The proper work of light is to make manifest: "They will not come to the light (saith our Saviour) lest their deeds be made manifest." Now the light of the Scripture doth manifest things unto us; it is by James compared to a looking-glass. When ye look upon a looking-glass, ye see three things, the glass, yourself, and all the other things, persons, stools or pictures that are in the room. So in looking in the Scripture, this great looking-glass, ye see the truths that are therein contained concerning God and Christ. There is God seen especially, and Christ seen; there also you see yourself, and your own dirty face; there also you see the creatures that are in the room with you, and their emptiness; the emptiness of men, and of all comforts and relations. This is that manifesting light under Christ, that is true light indeed.

As it is a true light, so it is an admirable and wonderful light. For there are the wonderful things of God's law; whereupon David prayed, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law." There is the light of Christ, who is called a marvellous light; and the more ye look into the Scripture and know, the more ye will

admire. In other knowledges, the more ye know, the less ye admire; *amor noti, admiratio ignoti:* but in Scripture knowledge, the more light ye have, and the more ye know, the more you will lift up your hands and admire, at your own ignorance and God's grace. It is a most admirable light.

As it is an admirable light, so it is a safe and sure light. Other false lights do lead men into fens and bogs; but we have a more sure and safe light, and the more of it falls upon your eye, the more is your eye preserved. It is not so with outward lights, *vehemens sensibile destruit sensorium.* Your eye is able to bear a moderate light; but if the light be vehement, your sense is not able to bear it, but is destroyed by it. Not so with this Scripture light, the stronger and more vehement it is, the more it doth perfect the eye of your soul; it is not destructive, but it is perfective light. Upon which account Austin prayed to God, *Sint sacræ Scripturæ tuæ deliciæ meæ in quibus nec fallere possum nec falli:* O Lord, said he, let thy Holy Scriptures be my delights, by which I can neither deceive nor be deceived. This is that safe and sure light indeed.

As it is a safe and sure light, so it is a pleasant and satisfying light. Light is pleasant to the eye, and the eye ordinarily is not satisfied with seeing: but this is that light which doth bring men to rest; for when a man knows what shall he his portion for ever, then his heart is at rest, and not before. Now it is only the Scripture, and the light thereof, which under Christ doth discover and manifest that unto men. "Stand in the old and good way (saith the prophet), and ye shall find rest." That way is this Scripture way: if a man once depart from the Scripture, he runs from one error to another, and he rests not. But here is rest to be found. This is that satisfying light which doth bring unto rest.

As it is a pleasant, satisfying light; so it is a full and sufficient light, able to make the man of God perfect unto salvation. "The law of the Lord is perfect," Psalm xix; and it makes perfect, else it were no rule of life: for as Austin speaks, the *regula* must be *regulato suo adequata.* Surely therefore it is sufficient to administer help unto all conditions. It is a lanthorn to our feet; whatever ground our feet are on, or in what dark place soever, this light can

find them out. What state can you be in, but the Scripture will find a commandment for your rule, and a promise for your assistance and reward. It is able to reach unto all conditions, for it is a full and sufficient light.

As it is a full and sufficient light, so it is a clear light, a light that shineth; it hath no thief in it, as many lights and candles have: not that there are no hard things therein, and difficulties; where is the man that ever was able to untie all the knots and difficulties of Scripture? * Paul's epistles have their hard things to be understood, even in the eyes of Peter, 2nd epist. iii. 16. Yet what truth is in all the Scripture, which is necessary to salvation, but doth lie plain and clear. "For this commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it afar off; it is not in heaven, &c.; nor is it beyond the sea, &c. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it," Deut. xxx. 11—14; Rom. x. 6, &c. "Unto you it is given (saith Christ to his disciples) to know the mysteries of the kingdom. If the gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that perish; but we have the mind of Christ," 1 Cor. ii. 16. Surely therefore this light is a clear and a shining light.

As it is a clear light, so it is the best light in the world, the most excellent light, a light beyond all other things which do pretend to light. Seven or eight things there are, in these times, which men do cry up as great lights, whereby many do profess to walk. And those are: 1. Revelations or visions. 2. Dreams. 3. Impressions made upon the heart, with or without a word. 4. Experience. 5. The law and light within. 6. Providence. 7. Reason. 8. Judicial Astrology. But now if you compare these lights with Scripture light, ye shall find that this is that only light which doth exceed them all, and that there is no more light in them than what they do borrow from it.

Instance I. Wherein doth this Scripture light exceed or go beyond revelations or visions, and the light thereof?

This Scripture light, as you have seen, is a full light, a light which did shine forth at once in and by Jesus Christ. Revelations and visions are more particular;

* Passimur apertis exercemur obscuris, illic fames pellitur hic fastidium.—Austin.

though God did sometimes speak in that way and manner, yet then he spake drop by drop, *guttatim*; but now he hath in these last days, spoken his full mind by his Son. These were but as the apples which did fall from the tree of wisdom; but in the gospel and Scripture, ye have the whole tree itself. Look therefore what difference there is between the tree, and some particular apple that doth fall from it; so great a difference there is between this and those.

Scripture light is the highest light; Scripture dispensation the highest dispensation: the dispensation of visions and revelations was of a lower rank. When the people of God were in their infancy, they were led much by visions and revelations; that being a dispensation which did most suit with an infant state. And what is the reason that so many christians now do desire visions and revelations, but because they are weak, and upon the return to the law again? The stronger any christian is, the more he doth walk by faith; and the more he doth live by faith, the more he doth choose to walk by the Scripture, the written word of God, the object of faith. It is recorded of Luther, that when he had fasted and prayed a whole day, and then had a vision of Christ, he cried out, and said, Avoid, avoid, thou confounded devil, I know no picture of Christ but the Scripture. Therein is Christ lively pictured, described, and set forth before our eyes: it is not so in revelations and visions.

This Scripture light is a more sure and certain light: for if God should now speak unto you by visions, or visional revelations, how would you know that this were the voice of God, and not a delusion of Satan? Would ye know it by the truth that is spoken: how do ye know the truth but by Scripture? And who doth not know that the devil will speak an hundred truths that he may croud in one lie amongst them.* Or would ye know that it is a true revelation, and not an illusion, by the high things that should be revealed? What greater, higher things, than the things of the gospel? These are the mystery of the kingdom, called the "deep

* Ditamus preterea quoniam non est humanitus regula generalis, vel ars dabilis ad discernendum semper et infallibilitur quæ veræ sunt et quæ falsæ aut illusoriæ revelationes.—Gersom. Tract. de distinctione verarum et falsar. visionum. Tom. i. 175, 176, &c.

things of God;" and says the apostle Paul, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." And how did Satan beguile Eve, but by persuading her to high things, that she should be like to God? And thus I fear many are beguiled even at this day amongst us. Or would ye know a revelation of God's from the delusion of Satan by the event, in that some future thing is revealed to you, which doth fall out accordingly? then read what the Lord says in Deut. xiii. 1; "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, saying, Let us go serve other gods, which thou hast not known; (verse 2) thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God." God may suffer a revelation to come to pass, and yet it may not be from the Lord, but to prove you, whether you love him, and will cleave unto him.* Or will ye know a true revelation from a delusion by your taste, *per saporem*, which is said to be the way whereby they did know that thing was of God? Then what an uncertainty will here be, that your whole salvation shall hang upon, and be ruled by your own taste. But now the written word of the Lord is certain, sure and stedfast; "Heaven and earth shall pass, but not one tittle of the word shall pass:" the least apex and tittle of it is more established than the mountains.

There is no danger in tending upon and taking heed to this Scripture light. 1. But if men do attend to revelations and visions, how easily may they be drawn to despise the Scripture, and such as do wait thereon. There were a generation of men, in Luther's days, that pretended unto great discoveries and revelations; men of great parts, and of high language; insomuch as Bucholcerus says of them, That they neither understood themselves nor others, nor others them,

* Sancti autem viri inter illusiones atque revelationes, ipsas visionum voces aut imagines quodam intimo sapore discernunt ut sciant vel quid a bono spiritu percipiant vel quid ab illusore patiantur nam si erga hæc mens cauta non fuerit per deceptorem spiritum multis se vanitatibus immergit, qui nonnunquam solet multa predicere, ut ad extremum valeat animam ex una falsitate laqueare.—Gregor. Dialo. Lib. iv.

but were always speaking of revelations, visions, deifications, &c.* As for other men that kept close to the Scripture, they called them vocabulists, literalists, grammatists, and creaturists. And so now it will be also, if men once do attend, and take heed unto visions, they will easily despise the Scriptures and such as do take heed thereto. Yea, 2. And if men do attend to these visions and revelations, how easily may they be drawn into popery and superstition? How did Mahomet set up his Alcoran? but by persuading the people to attend unto revelation. And how did the papists so much prevail upon the nations of the world? but by their visions and revelations. Search the stories, and you shall find that both the Turkish Alcoran and the popish religion had their foundations here: and if Luther had hearkened to revelations and visions, and not kept close to the Scripture, what had become of his reformation? Nay, but says he, *Pactum feci cum domino Deo meo, &c.* I have made a covenant with the Lord my God, that he may not send me visions, or dreams, or angels; *Contentus enim sum hoc dono, quod habeam Scripturam:* I am content with this gift, that I have the Scripsure, which doth abundantly teach and supply all those things that are necessary for this life and for the future. Yea, 3. If a man do once come to attend and take heed unto visions and revelations, how easily may he slide and depart into atheism; for what difference is there between an atheist, or a pagan infidel, and a Christian, but only this, that the Christian is for the Scripture, and doth adhere to that, the other not? Take away the Scripture from me, and there will be little difference between me and an infidel. But now the more a man doth attend unto visions, the more his heart and hands will be loosed from the Scripture. Surely, therefore, there is a danger in this; but Scripture light is a sure and a safe light.

Why but, you will say, may not God speak by extraordinary visions and revelations, in these days of ours?

* Swenckfeldiani sunt ter miseri, nec se nec alios intelligunt, non se que non intelligunt se dicere pugnantia non alios idque non tam naturali sua tarditate ingeniorum quam eo quod tenentur irretiti suis quibusdam enthusiasticis laqueis unde se extricari summum putant impietatem, dementabant multot magnifecis istis verbis quæ semper illis in ore illuminatio, revelatio, deificatio hominis interioris et spiritualis, &c.—Scultet. Anual. an. 1525, pages 269, 270.

Yes, without all doubt he may: God is not to be limited, he may speak in what way he please. If God will, he may say to a man, as he said to Abraham, "Go and offer up thy son Isaac to me:" but is not that commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," a more sure and certain rule for me to walk by? God may, if he will, say to a man as he once said to Hosea, "Go and take thee a wife of fornications:" but is not that commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," a more sure and certain word and rule for me to walk by? What God may do I will not dispute: he may thus speak to men, if it please him; yea, and if we may give credit unto known histories, the Lord hath spoken in this way sometimes to some of his servants since the apostles' time. Cyprian tells us of four revelations, which the Lord gave him, before that persecution did come upon them. Mr. Fox, in the Book of Martyrs, tells us of many visions which one Gallus, a French martyr, had; and of one which Mr. Philpot had: Scultetus also, and Sleiden tell us that God did reveal it to Luther, that there should be no war in Germany whilst he lived. Yet there is a great deal of difference between faith in the promise and a vision or revelation. Possibly, then, the Lord may speak in such a way as this is to some of his servants. But now, that you may have a boundary in this matter,

Though God may thus speak to some of his servants, yet if I have an itching desire after visions and revelations it is ill. The Lord may work a miracle, and being wrought, I am bound to receive it; but I may not put God upon the working of a miracle. So here, if God will speak in this way to me, he may; but I may not put him on it without tempting of him; yea, I am to be so far from desiring God to speak in this way of a vision, as I am bound rather to be backward to it. For as Alvarez observes well,* If a master be abroad in the night, and the servant be backward to open the door unto him, and to let him in, lest some thief should counterfeit his voice; the master will not take it ill at the servant's hands, that he made him stay so long before he did open the door, but will rather commend that servant. So, saith he, though a man be backward to receive these revelations, yet knowing what deceit there is abroad in the world, God will

* Revelationes caute recipiendas. Alvarez de vita spirituali de discretione spirituum. Lib. v. Cap. 4.

not take it ill at his hands, but will commend him for it. An itching desire after visions, argues that a man is not content with the Scripture; and is it not enough for us to see Christ in heaven? Gersom tells us * of an ancient father, who when the devil did appear to him, in the shape and image of Christ, saying, I am come in person to visit thee, for thou art worthy; did with both his hands shut his eyes, saying, *Nolo hic Christum videre;* I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me that I may see him in heaven.

Though God may possibly speak in this way to some of his servants, yet if the revelation be contrary to, or diverse from the Scripture, it is not God's but the devil's; for says the apostle, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, do preach any other gospel to you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 8; which he repeats again, and therefore good for us to mark again: "I say now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that which ye have received, let him be accursed," verse 9.

Yea, though the revelation or vision be not contrary to the Scripture, yet if it be brought to try or confirm the doctrine of the gospel, it is not the Lord's; for the doctrine of the gospel is confirmed already, and that sufficiently. We read, indeed, Heb. ii. 4, that when Peter was at first to go and open a door to the gentiles, then the Lord did appear to him in way of a vision; but after that truth was confirmed, that the gentiles should be called, then God appeared no more by vision for the confirmation thereof. Now the doctrines of the gospel are all confirmed by miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost; and therefore if any man have a revelation, to try or confirm any gospel doctrine, it is a delusion of Satan, not a revelation of God.

Though God may sometimes lead a man in extraordinary ways, and work by ways and means extraordinary; yet if a man's heart be drawn off from the ordinary means by what is extraordinary, it is not right. Mr. Greenham, famous for resolving cases of conscience, being once asked, as his book tells us, Whether there might now be visions, agreeable to

* Alter sanctorum patrum dum sibi dæmoni transfiguratus in Christum, diceret, Ego sum Christus personalitur te visitans qui dignus es; confestim clausit oculos utraque manu vociferans, nolo hic Christum videre, satis est ipsum in gloria si videro.—Gersom. de Probatione Spirituum.

the word? he said, there might be such extraordinary; but, saith he, whoso is moved with them, and not with the word, wherewith he is charged to be moved, and is not drawn the more by the vision to the true means, that man's faith is suspicious. And I pray, what is the reason why the Lord will not have us to believe the prophet, in Deut. xiii., that doth foretell such things as do come to pass? The reason is, because he seeks to turn you to other gods, whom ye have not known; and because he hath spoken to turn you from the Lord your God, and from keeping his commandments. Do I therefore come unto you, and pretend visions and revelations, that I may thereby turn a people from the good ways and ordinances of Christ? then I am a deceiver, and if you receive me, or the pretended revelation, you are deceived also.

Though God did speak to his people of old by visions and revelations, and those were not always examined by the word written; yet now the Lord speaketh nothing to us in this way, but what he will have examined by the word: for says the apostle, "If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than what I have preached unto you, let him be accursed." * Surely therefore the very revelations are to come under the examination of this word and gospel. And therefore, if there be any revelation that refuses to be examined by the word, it is a thief and a robber, an illusion of Satan, a vagrant, and not sent by God. And if the Scripture be that only *lydius lapis*, that touch-stone, whereby all our gold is to be tried; that light, whereby we are to try all our revelations and visions; then this Scripture light is the more excellent light in compare with the other.

And thus now I have done with the first thing, which doth pretend to much light in these days of ours; namely, visions and revelations. The Second followeth, namely, that of dreams and voices.

* Est autem moneta ista spiritualis revelationis tanquam aurea in quinque principaliter examinanda, scil in pondere, in flexibilitate, in durabilitate, in configuratione et colore; quartum signum est veritas; est namque sacra Scriptura locus vel officina ubi cunus regius moentæ spiritualis reconditur, quod si cum aliquo vel minimo puncto denarius discrepet in sua figuratione, et super Scriptionem ad hoc cuno regis absque ulla dubitatione falsatus est.—Gersom de distinct verat. vision. a fal. page 584, tom. i.

SERMON II.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 PETER I. 19.

INSTANCE II. As for dreams and voices, the Scripture or the written word of God, is more excellent than those; and the light of Scripture is the best light in compare with any light that may come from them. For,

1. In many dreams there is much vanity. Eccles. v. 7: "In the multitude of dreams, and many words (saith Solomon), there are also divers vanities; but fear thou God." * It seems then that the fear of God doth not consist with these. Here is a check upon our attendance on these: but says the apostle, "Let the word of God dwell in you richly;" there is no check on that.

2. Dreams are uncertain. Some are natural and some are supernatural. It is an hard thing to know whether the dream be natural or supernatural.† In case it be supernatural: supernatural dreams are either diabolical, from the devil; or divine, from God: and it is an hard thing to know whether it be of God, or from Satan. Some think, that if dreams do greatly afflict and trouble the mind with some sharp impression, then they are of God. "Because (says Pilate's wife) I have suffered many things this night in a dream:" and this dream of hers, say they, was of God. But others think rather that it was from Satan, who would have hindered the death of Christ, and so the great work of man's redemption. But if ye look into Job vii. ye shall find that he saith to God, "Thou scarest me with dreams:" yet it was Satan that did it, for as before, when Satan by his in-

* Somnia ne cures nam fallunt somnia plures.

† Gregor. Moral. lib. 8.

Somnia θεο πεμπτα graviter animos somniantum feriebant, quod divinitus immissorum somniorum est quasi proprium.—Gerard in Gen. cap. xl. p. 705.

Somnia divinitus inspirata vehementer movent somniantem, habent impressiones valde acres, quale fait Pharaonis, in quo tanta fuit consternatio animi et εκστασις et sentiret esse divinam quandam admonitionem.—Luther in Gen. 31.

Circa cognitionem humanæ mentis duo oportet considerate scil. representationem, rerum et judicium de rebus representatis si cui fiat divinitus representatio aliquarum rerum per similitudines imaginarias non est talis censendus propheta nisi illuminetur ejus mens ad judicandum.—Aquin. 22. q. 173. art. 2.

struments took all from Job, he saith, "The Lord hath taken away;" so here, when Satan vexed and scared him with dreams, he saith to God, acknowledging his providence, "Thou scarest me with dreams:" and yet I say it was Satan, for he was put into Satan's hand, and whatever affliction he met with, it was from Satan and his instruments. So that the trouble and suffering of the dream, doth not argue that it is from God. It is a very hard thing to know whether it be of God, or from Satan. And in case that the dream be of God, yet it is an hard thing to know the meaning and interpretation of it. For Pharaoh had a dream, but all his magicians could not interpret it; that was a work for Joseph. And so, though Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and that might be of God, yet neither he nor his wise men could tell the interpretation thereof; that was a work for Daniel, the work of a prophet. A wicked man may have a dream from God, but it requires the spirit of no less than a prophet to give the interpretation thereof. But now, are we at such uncertainties in reading the word? Can none but a prophet understand the Scripture? The priests and levites gave the sense of the word to the people ordinarily, yet they were no prophets. The word of the Lord is a light and lanthorn unto all our feet, plain and easy to be understood, in all those things that are absolutely necessary unto our salvation.

But may not God speak unto us by a dream now, if he will?

Without doubt he may, if he please; God is free. But where do we find in Scripture, that dreams are an ordinance of God now, wherein he hath commanded us to wait upon him for the expectance of any mercy?

And if God should speak to me by a dream, yet if I make that a sign of mine own godliness, or of God's love to me, then am I under a delusion; for even wicked men have had their dreams from God, Balaam, and Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar, and others. Do I therefore dream a strange dream, and conclude that therefore I am in God's love, because he thus speaks to me? then am I deceived. What wise man is there in the world, that will or dare lay and venture his soul and salvation upon a dream, or the interpretation of it? But you may and must lay and venture your souls

and salvation upon the Scripture. Surely therefore the light of dreams is not to be compared therewith.

But suppose that I have an immediate voice, is not that to be compared with the Scripture?

An immediate voice, say you. Either that immediate voice is from hell or from heaven: if it come from hell, to report and certify you of the torments thereof, that you may repent of your sins, then hear what our Saviour saith of that in compare with the Scripture: Luke xvi. 31, "They have Moses and the prophets, and if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." And if that voice which you have, do come from heaven, then either it is the voice of an angel or of God himself. If it be the voice of an angel, then see what the apostle saith of that in compare with the word and Scripture: Gal. i. 8, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed:" and this is that gospel which we have now written in this book of the Galatians. And if the voice which you have do come from God himself, then see what the apostle saith here of that in compare with the Scripture: verse 17, "There came a voice to Christ, from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son; and this voice which came from heaven, we heard." Verse 19, "And we have also a more sure word of prophesy, which is the written word;" for saith he, "No prophesy of Scripture," &c. So that ye see, this written word of God, or the Scripture, is beyond all dreams and immediate voices. It may be some will say, But may not God speak by an immediate voice to a soul now? To which I answer, What God may do is one thing; and what he doth in the way of a settled ordinance, wherein we are to wait on him and expect from him, is another thing. Ye read in Heb. i. 1, 2, thus: "God who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken by his Son." In time past he spake by visions, dreams and voices. If there be such an ordinance still, wherein we are still to wait on God, why doth the apostle make this difference between times past, and the present time of the Son? Nay, says Luther, but there is such a sufficiency in the Scripture, that though some men should

have visions, dreams and voices; yet the Scripture is so full, that *nec curo, nec desidero,* I neither care for nor desire them. I read of a certain woman, a religious lady of the empress' bed-chamber, whose name was Gregoria, that being much troubled about her salvation, did write to Gregory, that she would never cease importuning him until he had sent her word that he had received a revelation from heaven that she should be saved: to whom he returned this answer, *Rem difficilem postulas, et inutilem;* Thou desirest an hard matter and unprofitable; hard for me to obtain, and unprofitable for thyself to have. And so say I, if any should come to me, desiring to implore God for such a voice, or dream, or revelation; I must answer, Man or woman, thou desirest an hard work for me to do, and a thing unprofitable for thyself to have. Thou hast the Scriptures, go search the Scriptures, wait thou upon God therein; for in them are the words of eternal life: they are a sure and a safe light, more sure, safe and certain, than all revelations, visions, dreams, or immediate voices. And thus I have done with the second instance.

Instance III. As for impressions made upon the soul, whether by a particular word or without it; the Scripture, or the written word of God, is more sure than those; and the light thereof, the best and most excellent light in compare with the light of impressions. For,

1. Impressions, though good, are not our daily food. *Aqua vitæ,* or strong water, is good in a quothing, fainting fit, but it is not good to make it our daily drink. So here, in case the soul be in a fainting fit, it is good to have the impression of some particular word or scripture: but this impression is not daily food; the word of God written is our appointed food, our daily food, whether it come with impression or without impression; this is that food and heritage which under God we must live upon. Ps. cxix. 111.

2. If all that light and comfort which men have from impressions be derived from the word, then the Scripture must be more excellent; for that which makes excellent, is more excellent; that which makes comfortable, is more comfortable. But look whatever light and comfort a man hath from the setting on, or impression of a particular word, is

from the word itself; for if any impression have not the impression and stamp of the word upon it, it is adulterate coin.

3. There may be much danger in walking and living by impressions, whether with or without a word. Good people are very apt and prone to walk and live by impressions, but it is a dangerous thing so to do; thereby some are nursed up in ignorance, and seek for no other knowledge in the study of the Scriptures, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual: thereby some are always kept unsettled in their spiritual state and condition; for if a word come, then they have comfort; but when none come, then doth their comfort fail: thereby also some are misled and carried from the good ways of God and his ordinances; for, I pray, what is the reason that so many, in these days of our's, have departed from the ordinances of Christ, but because they took up truths by impressions, ordinances of Christ by impressions, and the good ways of God by impressions; and so when false impressions came, they presently swallowed them, and have proved apostates; yea, and how many are there, who lie sucking the sweetness of the impression, do lose the sweetness of that very word which is impressed: as with a lamb or child that is sucking; though the child suck the teat or breast for a time, yet if you draw away the breast or teat, and give it a dry finger, it doth suck that. So it is with many; first they suck the sweetness of some particular word that is set on the soul: but when they live and walk by impressions, what do they then but suck the dry finger, the very impression? and so do lose the sweetness of the word itself. But now take the word of God written, and there is no danger in living and walking by it; it is our duty to walk and to live thereby.

But is there no use then of impressions with or without a particular word? Is there no light that doth shine through them?

I answer, Yea, much, for they comfort in time of temptation, desertion or affliction. In case a man be in the dark, and God doth give out some particular word, setting it with power on his soul, it is much comfort to him.

Or in case a man be in some straits, not knowing which way to take. Two ways may be before him, both comfortable, both lawful; yet a man is troubled, and would fain go

that way wherein he may do God most service. If a particular word be set upon his heart, whereby he is inclined one way rather than another, it may be some guide to him.

Or in case that a man doth see his way clear before him, yet knows that he shall meet with many difficulties and much opposition; if now God do give out a particular word to him, it will strengthen his heart and hands much, as in that case of Joshua, chap. i.

But though God do speak much by impressions sometimes, and there is much light and comfort riseth in the soul by them; yet,

If I do make an impression the certain judge of doctrines, then am I much deceived. This is the great privilege of the Scripture, saith the protestant, against the papists, to be the only judge of doctrines and controversies. Indeed God may please to open a place of Scripture to the soul, in the imprinting of it; but to make an impression the certain judge of a doctrine, is without doubt a great error: for where do we find that ever God hath appointed an impression unto this chair. You read of Mr. Fox, that blessed man who wrote the Book of Martyrs, that he had so great and deep an impression made upon his soul, concerning the meaning of a scripture, that he thought he could not be deceived therein. He tells the story twice, once in the 'History of the Ten Persecutions of the Primitive Times,' and once in his Commentary on Rev. xiii. The scripture opened and sensed to him, was verse 5 of that chapter: "And he shall continue forty-two months." Writing, saith he, the story of the ten persecutions, I was so much affected therewith, that I even expostulated with God, why he would suffer his people to suffer such cruel things; and why he would not tell his church and servants when the time of the end of their trouble should be: whereupon, saith he, being in this sad conflict in my own soul, I heard a voice, saith the English relation, but the latin thus; *Sine voce tamen;* only I did not hear a voice, but had *vehementem cogitationis impressionem,* a vehement impression of mind, which whispered thus to me; Oh, thou fool, count these months by Sabbaths, as the weeks of Daniel are counted by Sabbaths; which I did, says he, with the help of some godly merchants, and found the years to be two hundred and ninety-four, just the time of the ten persecutions: doubt-

less, therefore, this is the time of the beast, and herein I was fully satisfied.* Yet this cannot be the true meaning of that text, as is confessed by all hands; for this beast that is to continue forty-two months, doth receive his power from the dragon; therefore it is not the time of the dragon, but the red dragon; that is, the heathen Roman emperor did persecute the woman, Rev. xii. standing before her, to devour the man child, the seed of the church, as soon as she was delivered, verses 2 and 3. Yet this good and holy man thought, that that must needs be the meaning of the forty-two months, because the interpretation came to him with such an impression. Possibly, therefore, a good man may be much deceived by impressions, especially when they come with a particular word. But where do we find in all the Scripture, that we are to judge of doctrines by impressions? No, but by the written word of God; that is the only rule whereby we must judge, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, and one scripture with another.

Though there may be much comfort found in the way of impressions, especially coming with a word, yet if the word be not set upon the heart, according to the true sense and scope of it, we have cause to fear that the impression is not of God, but an illusion of Satan. For where do we find in Scripture, that ever God did set a word upon the soul, but in the true sense and scope of it? The devil brought a word to Christ, and applied it, not according to the true scope thereof; "Cast thyself down (says he); he shall give his angels charge over thee:" this was not according to the scope of the Scripture. But if God set on a scripture with a deep impression,

* Nomen illius qui responsum accepit non hic edo, nec opus est: fluctuanti in hunc modum hominis animo multumque secum cogitanti do his rebus, tandem felicior quædam Divini (ut reor) neminis gratia, quæ arcano quodam admonitionis sibilo velut respondens sine voce tamen at non sine vehementi cogitationis impressione, subito in mentem eis suggerit vel increpat potius stulte numera hos menses quem admodum Daniel numerit suas hebdomadas per septenarium numerum annorum, qui anni si rite supputentur faciunt 294, rem ipsam ita ut gesta est vera, simplicique narratione adnotandum duxi, Deus mihi testis nec mentior nec singo nec muto quicquam, nec postulo ut quisquam τέλοις τοις χρηματιτμενοις, fidem adhibeat nisi velit qui non velit, ipse de sua tripode, adferat meliora, mea quidem ita fert ratio ut credam Christum nec mortuum esse nec mutum, quorsum in ecclesia templum Dei aut in templo oraculum cum propitiatorio si nemo in cælis sit qui in dubiis Scripturæ locis vobis interpellantium respondeat.—Foxus in Apoc. xiii. page 216.

it was always according to the true sense and scope of the scripture. For example, Nehemiah being at prayer, as ye read chap. i., God gave him a word, with a sweet impression, and it was according to the true sense thereof. So Acts iv; the apostles were at prayer, and God gave a word to them out of the iind Psalm, and it was according to the true scope thereof. Where do we find that ever God did set on a particular word, but according to the true meaning of it? Have I therefore an impression with a word? yet if the word be not set on my soul, according to the true meaning and scope of it, then have I cause to fear that it is rather a delusion of Satan, than the impression of God.

Though the impression be of God, yet if the application be beyond the impression, I am still in an error. There is an impression of a word, and there is the application of it: the impression may be God's, and the application may be mine own. The Lord gave Abraham a word, that his seed should be as the stars; but he made a false application thereof when he went unto Hagar for the fulfilling of that word. So the Lord gave a word to Eliphaz, Job iv. 12, "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof; fear came upon me and trembling: (verse 14) then a spirit passed before my face, it stood still, but I could not discern it: then I heard a voice, saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God," verse 15. Here was an impression with a word, and this was from God; but he applies this to and against Job, chapter v. 1; the impression was of God, but the application was his own. Possibly, then, a man may have an impression from God with a word, yet the application may be his own; but though the impression be never so full and deep, yet if the application be beyond the impression, he is still in an error. And therefore, seeing that it is an easy thing, and usual, even for the children of Abraham to make application beyond the impression, the safest, surest way, is to keep close to the written word of God, which is both the judge of all our doctrines, and the only rule of all our practices; and therefore above and beyond all impressions, whether with or without a word. And thus I have done with the third instance.

Instance IV. As for that light and law of grace which is

in the saints, the light of the Scripture is beyond and more excellent than that. For,

The light and law within us here is imperfect, for we see but in part, and know in part; 1 Cor. xiii. 9, "Now we see through a glass darkly." And lest any man should think that Paul spake this only of some babes in Christ, he speaketh out yet more expressly, putting himself into the number; verse 12, "Now I know in part;" and this in part is set in opposition to what is perfect, for says he, verse 9, "We know in part, and prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come," &c. verse 10. So that whatever law, or light, or knowledge is within us now is imperfect, but the word of God written, the Scripture and the light thereof, is perfect: for says the Psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect," Psalm xix.

The law of grace within, and the light within, is not able to convince others. If I feel a light and law within me, and say, This must needs be so, for I find it thus within me, I have a light within me for it; this will not convince another. But the Scripture, by the breathing of the Spirit of God with it, will convince another, and is able to convince another: Titus i. 9, "Holding fast the faithful word, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince gainsayers." How are gainsayers to be convinced then? What, by the light or law within? No, but by sound doctrine fetched from the faithful word.

Is there, then, no use of the law, and light, and Spirit within us: doth not God speak and direct thereby?

Yea, "The spirit of a man (saith Solomon) is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward rooms of the belly." When God doth set up a light or candle in the soul, he may thereby go into all the inward chambers of the soul, discovering those heaps of sin that are in the soul.

Yea, This inward law and light doth not only discover evil, but it doth incline to good, and strongly incline the soul thereunto; therefore it is called a law: not because it is a rule to us (for the body of death and sin is called the law in your members), but because of its power and force to incline the soul unto what is good.

Yea, it doth not only incline a man unto what is good, but it enables him thereunto. It is that principle upon which

all his good actions grow, and from whence they spring. All true good must proceed from a good principle; and this law, and light, and Spirit within, is that principle whereby a man is enabled unto what is good. But,

Though the law, and light, and Spirit within us, be a principle of good, yet it is not the rule of our goodness or lives. For,

If the law, and light, and Spirit within, be our rule, then what need the Scripture or the word without any longer? But the Scripture and the word of God written, is a rule still, it is settled in heaven, and doth endure for ever. Psalm cxix. 89, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." And saith Paul to Timothy, "I charge thee, in the sight of God, that thou keep this commandment until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1st epist. vi. 14. Timothy doth not live in person to the appearing of Christ, but those that succeed him do and shall, unto whom this charge is made. And if ye look into chap. iii. ye find that Paul saith to him, "These things write I to thee, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God:" yet Timothy had a light, and law, and Spirit of God within him. So that though a man have the Spirit, light, and law within him, he is yet to be ruled by the word of God written; the Scripture and the word written is yet to be a rule unto him; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them.

But if the Spirit that is in me, be the same Spirit with that which did write the Scripture, what need I wait on or be ruled by the word without, or the Scripture, any longer?

I answer, Because when the Spirit comes, it takes of the things of Christ, and opens them to you. It is sent to open the Scripture to you, not to take away the Scripture from you; it is not sent to be your rule, but to be your help to understand the rule.

Because, although ye have the same Spirit which did write the Scriptures, yet you have not the same inspiration of the Spirit. All believers in Paul's time had the same Spirit that Paul had, but not the same inspiration of the Spirit; that is very diverse. The apostle speaking of diversities of gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 11, "But (saith he) all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every one as it pleaseth

him." So that though a man have the same Spirit wherewith the Scripture was written, yet he may not have the same inspiration. But because people understand not this, therefore they think that if they have the same Spirit, they may lay by the Scripture as to their rule. But,

If the law, and light, and Spirit that is in me, be my rule; then I may do any thing without sin: I may whore, be drunk, steal, or any thing without sin; for it is no sin to do what the rule commands me. And if the Spirit, light, and law within, do command me to do it, it is no sin to me, because my rule commands me to do it, and sin is a transgression of a rule. But the law, light and Spirit may command me to do such things as these, if it be my rule; for it may command any thing but sin, but it cannot be sin if the Spirit do command, for the very commanding of the Spirit takes off the sin of the action, because the rule commands it. Oh, what abominable practices will this doctrine lead a man into, namely, that the law, light and Spirit within, is his rule.

Yea, if the law, and light, and Spirit that is in me, be my rule, then am I my own rule, and so I am God; for he that is his own rule, is God. But if the law, and light, and Spirit within me, be my rule, then am I my own rule; and what is all this but horrid blasphemy? Surely therefore the law and the word without me, is not my rule. Though the law, and light, and Spirit in me, be my principle; yet it is not my rule, that is the word and Scripture only.

Though the law, and light, and Spirit within, be a great help unto us in our way to life, yet it must be tried by the word written; for if it be not tried by the Scripture, then it must be tried by nothing. But, John i. 4, he saith, "Try the spirits, whether they be of God or no." That law, or light, or Spirit within you, is Christ in you; but Christ in you, is to be tried or examined: 2 Cor. xiii. 5, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith, prove your own souls; know ye not that Christ is in you, unless ye be reprobates?" And if Christ without us, Christ in the days of his flesh, did submit himself to the trial of the Scriptures, "Search the Scriptures (saith he) for they testify of me;" then surely the Spirit of Christ in us, will not refuse the same: Christ in us, is not more privileged than Christ with-

out us; but Christ without us was tried by the Scriptures, therefore Christ within us much more. And if all that light, and law, and Spirit within us, be to be tried by the Scripture, then surely the light of the word written, is a more excellent light than that light which is within. And thus I have now done with the fourth instance.

Instance V. As for experience, christian experience; the word of God written, and the light thereof, is more excellent than experience, and the light of it, simply considered. For so much light as there is in experience, is borrowed from the Scripture and the word of God written.

It is short of the Scripture; for Scripture light extendeth unto all our actions, a light unto our paths. There is nothing hid from the light thereof, no duty incumbent upon us that is hid from the light thereof. But though I have much experience in this way, yet I may have little or none in another. My experience cannot say, Nothing is hid from me, and from my light.

Though experience be a great help to our faith, yet take it alone, abstracted from the word, and it cannot heal our unbelief. The staff that is in a man's hand, is a good help to him, but it cannot heal his lameness. So is this staff of experience, though it be a good help in my way, yet it cannot heal the lameness of my unbelieving heart; but the word can, and the Scripture doth.

Is there then no use of our experiences? Is there no light therein?

Yea, much, for it bringeth forth hope; experience worketh hope: Rom. v, "Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope," verses 4, 5. Here is the genealogy of hope; but the next parent of hope is experience. "So the poor hath hope," Job v. 16. How so? He counteth up many experiments, and when he hath done, he concludes thus, "So the poor hath hope." It is experience then which doth work hope.

But though experience be the parent of hope, yet it is not the ground of our faith; it is an help unto faith, but not the first ground of our faith. The scripture and the promise under Christ is; Rom. xv. 4, "Whatever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have

hope." So that the Scripture and the word of God written, is the first ground of our faith and hope.

And though we have much experience, yet if we do not trust in the word of promise under Christ, over and beyond all our experience, we do evil.

And if all our experience is to be reduced to the word written, then the Scripture is more excellent than all experience; but all our experience is to be reduced unto Scripture. Surely therefore the Scripture, or the word of God written, is more excellent than all experience, and the light thereof. And thus I have done with the fifth instance.

Instance VI. As for divine providence, the Scripture is a more sure light than it. For,

God doth sometimes try us by his providence; he doth sometimes lay a providential dispensation before us, to try and see what we will do. So he led the children of Israel in the wilderness forty years to try them, and to know what they would do, and to humble them. But the Scripture is the rule of our doing, and therefore a more safe and sure light to walk by.

And if the providence of God extendeth unto all our actions, good and evil, and to evil as well as unto what is good; then there is no certain rule or judgment to be made up from thence. Now so it is, that the providence of God extendeth unto all our sins: the Jews crucified Christ, God's providences did extend unto that; "Being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands ye have crucified him," Acts ii. 23. When Jonah fled from God, there was then present a ship that was bound for Tarshish: here was a providence. And when Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, there came by certain merchants who did trade into Egypt: here was a providence. Now if the providence of God do thus extend to our very sins, then we cannot make up our judgment, our rule from a bare providence; but you may make up your judgment and rule from the Scripture and the word of God written.

Doth not God speak by providence; guide and direct by providence sometimes?

Yea, he doth sometimes guide us with his eye, as the Psalmist speaks. Thus when the king could not sleep, he called for the records, and found therein that Mordecai had

been faithful to him; the providential eye of God did guide the king to do something for Mordecai. And when Abraham's servant prayed, and the damsel came forth to meet him according to his prayer, the providence of God did lead and guide to that marriage of Isaac and Rebecca.

But though the Lord doth sometimes guide us with the eye of his providence; yet if I make the providence of God the rule of lawfulness or unlawfulness, then am I in a great error, and exposed thereby unto all sin; for then may I say, if I be tempted to kill or murder myself, the providence of God is the rule of lawfulness or unlawfulness. Now here is a knife, a rope, a pond, or an instrument of death, which falls in my way by unexpected providence, therefore I will and must now murder myself. Understand the thing rightly therefore I pray you, thus: In case that two things are before me, and both are lawful; providence opening a door to one, and shutting the door upon the other, it doth direct to that one, and not to the other. But the providence of God doth not make a thing lawful, which is in itself unlawful. It doth direct us in doing of a thing lawful, but it doth not make a thing lawful; it is not the rule of lawfulness or unlawfulness. But the Scripture and the word of God is, it is the only rule whereby I may and must make up my judgment of lawfulness and unlawfulness; it is that only which doth stamp lawfulness upon an action. Surely therefore the light of the Scripture, is more excellent light, than divine providence. And thus I have done with the sixth instance.

Instance VII. As for human reason and the light thereof, Scripture light is more excellent than it. For,

Though human reason be a beam of divine wisdom, yet if it be not enlightened with an higher light of the gospel, it cannot reach unto the things of God as it should; it is *panis pauperum,* the poor man's bread, compared by some to the dough which the Israelites brought out of Egypt, which was prepared with much labour, and then called *panis pauperum,* Deut. xvi. 3. But the word of God in the Scriptures is compared to manna, called the bread of angels; for the gospel did come down from heaven in a special manner; for though reason be the gift of God, yet it doth proceed from God as he is God and general Ruler of the world: but the

gospel, and the light thereof, did proceed from the Father by the Son to the church; Rev. xxii. 1, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," John i. 17, 18.*

Though reason be the gift of God, and a beam of the wisdom of God, yet it cannot sufficiently discover a man's sins unto him; not his secret sins, not his original sin, not his sin of unbelief, and against the gospel; but the word of God, the Scripture light, can and doth.

And as mere human reason cannot make a sufficient discovery of sin, so it cannot strengthen against sin and temptation: temptations answered by reason will return again; it cannot convert the soul. "But the word of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," Psalm xix.

Though the light of reason be good, yet it is not a saving light. How many are there in the world, who have strong reason, yet shall go to hell, and miscarry to all eternity? But the light of the Scripture, gospel light, is saving light. *Surgunt indocti*, said a great bishop and learned man, *et capiunt cælum et nos cum omni doctrina nostra trudimur in infernum.* Poor men arise, and take the kingdom of heaven by force, when we with all our learning are thrust into hell. Why so? The poor receive the gospel; not many wise, not many learned. "Father, I thank thee (saith Christ) thou hast revealed these things to babes." It is revelation light from the gospel that doth bring to heaven: mere human reason cannot do it.

Is there then no use of reason and of the light thereof?

Yea, much, not only in civil things, but in the things of God, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.† Did not Christ himself make use of reason to prove the resurrection: There is a resurrection (saith he), for God is not the God of the dead but of the living. If God be the God of Abraham, then Abraham must rise again; but he is the God of

* Morn. Prefat. Lib de vera relig. Prefat. Lib. de Euch.

Ames. de traductione peccatoris ad vitam et de lumine naturæ et gratiæ. Dr. Voet. de ratione humana de rebus fidei.

Alting. Loc. com. pars i. Loc. 2. dg.

Tunc solum vere Deum cognoscimus quando ipsum esse credimus supra omne id quod de Deo cogitari ab homine possibile est.

Aquin. contra Gent. Lib. i. cap. 5. 6.

† Dr. Voeti. de ratione humana in rebus fidei. p. 5—7.

Abraham, for he is not the God of the dead but of the living.* Here he makes use of reason: so the apostles after him. Surely, therefore, we are not so to adhere to the letter of the scripture, as to deny the use of our reason in finding out the true sense and meaning of the scripture; for then we must hold with the papists, that the bread in the Lord's supper is turned into the body of Christ, for the letter saith, "This is my body." Reason is of great use, even in the things of God; and well hath he said, *Contra rationem nemo sobrius;* Against reason, no man is sober; against Scripture, no man is a christian; and against the church, no man is peaceable.† But,

Though there be a good use of reason even in the things of God, yet reason is but the drawer of water, an handmaid; and therefore if Hagar will perk above her mistress, the Scripture, she must be turned out of doors.‡

And though you do make use of your reason in the things of God, yet if you will not yield unto Scripture truth and gospel truth, until you can see reason for the thing believed, and how in a way of human reason such a thing can be; then you are in a great error. For as Luther speaks, in the matter of the gospel, we must shut our eyes, and go blindfold into the commandments of God. "The wisdom of the world (saith the apostle) looks upon gospel truths as foolishness:" and as none know the things of a man, but the spirit of man; so none know the things of God, but the Spirit of God; therefore not by human reason only. The sun is not seen but by the light of the sun; nor Christ, but by the light of Christ. This know first, says the apostle in this text, though you do attend to the word of prophecy, yet you must have the Spirit of God, not human reason only. Why? For as it was written, so it must be understood; but "all prophecy of Scripture was written by the inspiration of the Spirit, and did not come from man." The schoolmen speak well: Rea-

* Rationis in Theologia usus, Alting. pars i. loc. 209.

† Contra rationem nemo sobrius, contra Scripturam nemo christianus, contra ecclesiam nemo pacificus.

‡ Και οπ τα υπερ φυσιν εν τη φυσει γινομενα καπα την θειαν δυναμιν, αδυνατον κατα τον λογον της φυσεως ποιητα θαι την παραςασιν.—Justin Martyr. Q. 107.

sons before faith lessen and diminish it; after faith they strengthen it.*

Though you do make use of reason in the things of God, yet your very reason is to be mortified, crucified; *Crucifigamus istam pestem, quare,* says Luther; We must crucify that pest and plague. Why? *Deus non vult, non esse quaristas, vel rationistas;* God would not have us that are christians, to be querists or wherefore-ists: naked, simple obedience is best in the eyes of God. With man, says he, we must consider, *Quid,* what it is that is commanded; but in our obedience to God, we must consider, *Quis,* who it is that commandeth. And this is to be the ground of our faith and obedience; as we must renounce our will, so we must deny our reason. But we must not deny the Scripture, nor crucify the Scripture, nor renounce the Scripture. Surely, therefore, the light of the Scripture, and the word written, is beyond and more excellent than all human reason and the light thereof.† And thus I have done with the seventh instance.

Instance VIII. As for judicial astrology. That is another

* Quid Athenis et Hirosolymis? quid academia et ecclesia? quid hæreticis et christianis? nostra institutio de porticu Salomonis.—Tertul. de Prescript.

Κι γαρ οισφοδρα μωροι, &c. valde stulti sunt, qui rationibus maxime permittunt quæ non licet invenire nisi per fidem, ex philosophia res divinas velle intelligere est candens ferrum non forcipe sed digitis contrectare.—Chrysostom. 1 Cor. Hom. 5.

Aufer argumenta ubi fides queritur.—Ambros. Lib. de fide. cap. v.

Si quis potest intelligere Deo gratias agat, si non potest non immittat cornua ad ventilandum, sed submittat caput ad venerandum.—Anselm. Ep. de Fide arvo. Pap. cap. ii.

Laudatur maria, quod rationem fide prevenit, et punitur Zacharias quod fidem ratione tantavit.—Bern. Epist. 109.

Rationes precedentes minunt fidem subsequentes augent.

† Dicimus nullam rationem humanam esse principium quo seu per quod aut ex quo seu cur credamus aut fundamentum aut legem aut normam credendorum ex cunis prescripto judecemus, &c. Dr. Voet. de ratione humana in rebus fidei, Disp. Select. pars prima.

Transeundum est e navicula rationis Verulam.

Apud Aristotelem argumentum est ratio rei dubiæ faciens fidem sed apud Christum argumentum est fides faciens rationem.—Altisodoren. prefat. sum.

Si quis idiota tali philosopho qualis Aristot. aut Pythagoras fuit de rerum principiis obstreperet nonne audiret arrogans et insaniens at quanto major est insania, ideo non credere divinæ philosophiæ quod multa non assequatur humanis intellectus.—Erasmus in Symb. Catech.

Tantum abest ut humana ratio fidei sit mensura ut ne naturæ quidem propter ignorantiam et pravitatem esse possit.—Morn. prefat. Lib. de Vera Religione.

thing that is cried up as a great means of light in these dark times of ours. Thereby men will undertake to tell how things may be found that are lost; what persons shall be joined together in marriage; what shall be the issue and end of suits in law and diseases; what ends men shall come to in reference to their lives; and what plagues and mortalities in commonwealths; and what not. This is, I say, this judicial astrology is cried up as a great light in these days of ours, but is, in truth, a work of darkness; for where do we find in Scripture, that God doth command any of his people to attend upon astrologers (or star-gazers, as the word calls them) for any such things as these. We are forbidden to learn the way of the heathen in fearing the signs of heaven; Jer. x. 2, and Deut. xviii. 9, "Thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations." Wherein? Verse 10, "There shall not be found amongst you any that maketh his son to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a necromancer." The observation of times is one of these things. These were the ways of the nations, these things were abomination to the Lord, these things cannot stand with a perfect heart, verse 13, "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God."

This destroys prophecy; for if a man can foretel future things by the stars, then what need of prophecy? The Lord tells us in the xlviith of Isaiah, that he will bring evil upon his people, which they with all their astrologers should not be able to foresee and hide themselves from: verse 11, "Therefore shall evil come upon thee, and thou shalt not know whence it riseth." No! but we will, might they say, go unto our astrologers. Do so, says God, verse 12, "Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, if so be thou mayest be able to profit:" and verse 13, "Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up and save thee: behold they shall be as stubble," verse 14. If astrologers and star-gazers can foretel the several changes in states and commonwealths, and what great things shall come to pass therein, and how they come to pass; then why doth God say here, that in spite of all them, thou shalt not know whence this evil comes? verse 11. Surely, therefore, such things as these are not to be read in the book of the heavens.

But is there no light of knowledge to be had from the stars, and do not the heavens teach and declare the Lord's handy-work: will ye condemn all astronomy?

Astronomy? No. There is much difference between astronomy, the lawful knowledge of the stars, and judicial astrology, whereby men would foretel all events. I grant, first, that there is a teaching work in the heavens; "The heavens declare the glory of the Lord," and so do all the creatures; yet this teaching is not able to convert the soul: and therefore when the Psalmist had said in the xixth Psalm, "The heavens declare," &c., he comes to shew where the true converting teaching is to be found, even in the Scriptures; verse 7, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Secondly, I grant, also, that the stars are for signs; so the word saith, Gen. i. 14, "Let there be lights in the firmament, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years." But how for signs? Of the weather: as the sun when it setteth with a red sky, foresheweth a fair day to follow. Matt. xvi. 2. Yea, and sometimes they import and are signs of God's displeasure. Luke xxi. 25. Ordinarily they are for signs to know when to sow, and plant, and prune, and reap; and are signs to sail by, for the mariners at sea. Yea, thirdly, I grant that the stars have a great influence upon these sublunary things, even upon the bodies of men and women.

But though the stars have a great influence upon this nether world, are signs of weather, and have a teaching power with them, as all other creatures have; yet if a man shall undertake by the stars, to foretell future events, which are accidental, depending on the wills and actions of men, he doth plainly step into the chair of God. This is God's great prerogative; therefore saith he, Isa. xli. 23, "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Those men, therefore, that will undertake to shew the things that are to come hereafter, would be known to be gods. But though they would be gods themselves, yet why should they not let God be God still? *Qui fatum ponit, Deum tollit:* he that sets up a fate, doth destroy God. And if all things come to pass by influence of the stars (else they cannot pretend to foreknowledge of them), then all things must come to pass by a fate. Yea, what doth this

practice otherwise, than, as Austin observes well,* make God the author of all the sin in the world? For if these astrologers can foretell future things, which depend on the will of man, and that by the stars, then the stars and their influence must be the cause thereof. For as Aquinas observes,† if such a constellation be a sign of an event, then it must be the effect of it, or the cause of it; the effect it cannot be. And if the influence of the stars be the cause of all sinful actions, then God must be the cause of all sin, for he hath made the star, and given it such an influence. This doth so clearly follow, that Austin,* (telling the story of a man's converting from this wicked art) saith, the man did confess that whilst he practised that art, he with others held, that *adulterium non faciebat voluntas propria sed Venus;* a man's own will was not the cause of adultery, but the star Venus; a man's own will was not the cause of murder, but the star Mars. Thus, saith he, doth this art of judicial astrology, lay the sin of all the world upon God himself; and it must needs do so, for

* Multi hoc dicunt, fatum mihi fecit, stellæ me fecerunt, ita jam per circuitum ad Deum volunt pervenire ad Deum accusandum, qui nolunt de compendio venire ad Deum placandum, et dicunt fatum mihi fecit, quid est fatum? stellæ me fecerunt, quid sunt stellæ? certe istæ quas in cælo perspicimus; et quis eas fecit? Deus, qui eas ordinavit? Deus, ergo vides quod voluisti dicere. Deus fecit ut peccarem, ita ille injustus tu justus, quod nisi ille fecisset tu non peccasses, tolle istas excusationes in peccatis memento illius Psalmi. Ne declines cor meum in verba maligna ad excusanda prccata, &c.

Ad hæc magni viri sunt qui defendunt peccata sua, magni sunt qui numerant sydera. Et computant stellas et tempora et dicunt quis quando. Vei peccet vel bene vivat et quando Mars facit homicidium et Venus adultarium magni docti viri videntur in hoc sæculo sed quid ait Psal. Ne declines cor, &c.—Austin in Psal. xxxi.

† Omne corporale signum vel est effectus ejus cujus est signu sicut fumus significat ignem a quo causatur vel est, cum non potest autem dici quod dispositiones cælestium corporum et motus sint effectus futurorum et ventuum, nec possunt reduci in aliquam superiorem rem communem quo sit corporalis &c.—Aquin. xxii, quest. 95, art. 5.

* Seductus enim ab inimico cum esset fidelis diu mathematicus fuit, seductus, seducens, deceptus, decipiens, illexit fefellit, multa mendacia locutus est, contra Deum qui dedit hominibus potestatem faciendi quod bonum est et non faciendi quod malum est, iste dicebat quod adulterium non faciebat propria voluntas sed Venus justum non faciebat Deus sed Jovis et alia multa sacrilega non parva. quam multis eum putatis Christianis nummus abstulisse! quam multi ab eo emerunt mendacium, &c.—Austin in Psal. lxxi, post tractatum cum mathematicus in populo monstraretur.

the cause of the causes, in things necessarily subordinate, must be the cause of the caused. But can our hearts bear the thoughts of such blasphemies as these? or can we think that a man can tell by the stars, what shall come to pass hereafter, when the Scripture saith, "Who can tell what a day will bring forth?" And Eccles. x. 14, "A man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell?" Again, chap. viii. 7, "For he knoweth not that which shall be; for who can tell him when, or how it shall be?" These astrologers do indeed hit the matter sometimes, and have foretold that which hath come to pass, and where such a thing lost may be found again. But I will tell you how; the devil doth assist them therein, and as they erect their scheme, he doth suggest unto them, and leaves his impressions upon their hearts concerning the matter, it being easy for him to make discovery of those things which pass through his own hands. Now because they do not go professedly to the devil, they think that they have nothing to do with the devil; whereas the thing is wholly from the devil, and not from the stars. And is this light then? or is the knowledge of this mystery to be called light? No, it is darkness, and a work of darkness. But the light of the Scripture is a pure light, a clear light, a light without any darkness, a light which doth come from God, and lead us unto God, not unto the devil. Surely, therefore, this light of Scripture is the best light, the most excellent light; more excellent than that of revelations and visions; more excellent than that of dreams and immediate voices; more excellent than that of impressions; more excellent than that of the law and light within; more excellent than that of christian experience, or that of divine providence, or that of human reason; more excellent than this pretended light (but in truth, darkness) of judicial astrology. Surely therefore it is the most excellent, safe and sure light in the world. Shall we then forsake the Scripture, and cleave to pretended lights and lying vanities? No, but if the Scripture be the best light, the most safe and sure light, then it is the duty of all the saints to take heed thereunto, and that especially in their dark times and seasons, which is the fourth general thing propounded. And thus I have done with the third general, namely, That Scripture

light is the most safe, sure, and the best light.* The fourth followeth.

SERMON III.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 PETER I. 19.

As Scripture light is the most excellent light, the best and most sure light, in compare with all other lights, or whatever may pretend to light; so, Fourthly, it is our duty, the duty of all the saints and people of God, to take heed thereunto, and that especially in their dark times and places; which is the fourth thing propounded to your consideration, and which doth necessarily follow from the former. For if the Scripture, or the written word of God, be our great and most sure light; then it is our duty, the duty of all the saints and people of God, to take heed thereunto, especially in their dark times and places. Yet further, ye shall do well that ye take heed thereunto, for the doctrine of the gospel written is,

1. The word of the Son of God. The more excellent the person is that speaks unto you, the more diligently ye will

* Occulto instinctu fieri spirituum non bonorum.—Austin de civit. Dei, lib. v, cap. 7.

Sunt hæc astrorum indicia ex pactis cum dæmonibus et instinctu; eorum occultissimo, quem nescientes humanæ mentes patiuntur.—Austin 2 lib. de Doctr. Christiana.

Et omnes hujusmodi artes vel nugatoriæ vel noxiæ superstitionis ex quadam pestifera societate hominum et dæmonum.—Ibid.

Prima causa istarum predictionum nonnunquam provenit ex pacto et societate quam inivit astrologus cum dæmone vel ex occulto ejus inflatu et instinctu.—Pererius in Genes. cap. i. v. 14, 15. Lib. 2, de astromantia.

Cælum est solum influens generale cujus ratio particularizatur vel singularizatur aut a Deo solo aut a dispositione materiæ, si autem objicitur quod inveniuntur predicere multa vera respondetur, quod multo plura falsa et ideo vera dicunt vel a casu, vel a multitudine eorum quo dicunt, vel ab observatione eorum quæ audiunt, aut fit ab mixtione operationis dæmonum propter seducendos tam predicentes quam fidem adhibentes in talibus, per damnabilem curiositatem sciendi futura et ca quæ pater solus habet in sua potestate.—Gerson pars prima Trilog. Astrolog. Theolog. prop. 11.

take heed unto what he saith. Now the gospel, or the word of God written, is the word of the Son. Some there are who say, that Christ only is called the Word, or the Word of God; and that the doctrine preached or written, is not the word, or the word of God. But though Christ be called the Word, John i, yet I do not find all in the New Testament, that he is called the Word of God for the present: there is a time a coming when he shall be called King of kings, Lord of lords, and the Word of God; but for the present he is called the Word. And if the doctrine preached be not called the word of God, why doth our Saviour say, "The sower went forth to sow, and some fell in the highway, some on stony ground, and some on thorny ground, and the seed is the word of God." Is that Christ? what, doth Christ himself in person fall on the highway ground, and stony ground? and is Christ divided? for the seed is the word of God, and some of it fell on one ground, and some on another: doth Christ himself fall thus? No, but the doctrine preached doth, and therefore that is called the word of God. And if the word written be not called the word of God, what doth the apostle mean when he saith, Rom. ix. 6, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect?" doth he mean Christ thereby? No, but he speaketh plainly the word of promise, which is written in the Scriptures. Yea, the whole Scripture is so full of this, that I need not turn to any particular place. The Scripture is every where called the word of God; and if the word of God written be the word of the Son, then we are to take heed thereunto; for says the apostle, Heb. ii, "Therefore ought we to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard; for if the word spoken by angels were stedfast, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" verses 1, 2, 3.

2. As the Scripture is the word of the Son, so it is the only rule of our lives.* Now that which is the only rule of

* Scriptura est luserna pedibus, a qua non deflectendum. Ecclesiæ sapientia, cognitionis forma τυπος διδαχης; cujus testimoniis omnia confirmanda ex qua oriuntur demonstrationes. Cui quæ consentiunt admittenda et quæ non consentiunt rejicienda. Ergo est vitæ fideique regula.—Chamierus, 1 tom. de cano fidei, lib. i, cap. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8—11.

our lives, we are in special manner to take heed unto. But the Scripture, and the word of God written, is the only rule of our lives; for it is a "light unto our feet, and a lanthorn to our paths," Psalm cxix. It is the wisdom of the church and people of God, Deut. iv. It is that which we may not turn aside from, either to the right-hand or to the left, Deut. xxviii. It is that whereby doctrines are to be rejected or admitted, Acts xvii. It is that which nothing must be added to or taken from, Deut. iv, Rev. xxii. It is that which we are all to have recourse unto for comfort and direction, Isa. viii. "To the law and to the testimony: if men say not so, it is because there is no light in them." Now if the Scripture, and the word of God written, be a light unto our path, the wisdom of the church and people of God; if it be that whereby doctrines are to be admitted or rejected; if that, from which we may not turn, either to the right or to the left, from which nothing may be taken, and to which nothing may be added; and if it be that which we are to resort continually unto for comfort and direction; then it is the rule, and only rule of our lives. But so it is, as all these forementioned scriptures do plainly prove; and therefore it is the rule and the only rule of our lives.

3. As the Scripture and the word of God written, is the only rule; so it is that salt which doth season all your enjoyments. It is the rule and measure of your worship; for if you do not worship according to the appointments of God in his written word, your worship is but idolatry and superstition: *Superstitio est quicquid est supra statutum.** It is the great relief of your souls in time of temptation. Hereby Christ answered to all his temptations: It is written; and again, It is written; and again, It is written: and Christ's practice must be your rule. It is that which sanctifieth all your outward comforts, even amongst the creatures; for says the apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 4, "Every creature of God is good, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word and prayer." I profess, says Luther,† I cannot live

* Omne quod extra Dei verbum est, est idolatria, omne quod fit in verbo est verus cultus sicut omne quod fit sine fide est peccatum et omne quod fit in fide est bonum opus: quod inter verbum et fidem est conjugium indissolubile.—Luther.

† Anima omnibus rebus carere potest excepto verbo Dei, ego quidem sine

without the written word of God; I can want any thing but the Scripture or the written word of God. If I were in hell, I could live with a promise; and though I were in paradise, yet if I had not the word with me, I could not live there. Oh, saith he, the word is so great and deep a treasure, that it doth increase by distributing. Yea, it is even *genus generalissimum omnium bonorum;* that general good thing under God and Christ, that hath influence into all good things.* And shall the word of God written be such a blessed treasure, and shall we not take heed thereunto?

4. As it is the salt of all your comforts, so it is, and shall be your judge at the great day. Christ is the only judge then; but this book of the Scripture, and the word of God written, is that whereby he will judge you, and me, and the world; for at the last and great day, when men come to be tried for their eternal lives, the books shall be brought out: not one book, but books. Rev. xx. 12, "And I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened." It seems then that three books shall be opened at the great day: one book is the book of life; two other there are; the book of God's records, for a book of remembrance is written upon all our actions, Mal. iii.; and the book of the Scripture, or the word of God: for saith our Saviour, John xii. 48, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Now this word that Christ hath spoken, is written; and therefore men shall be judged thereby. But if the Scripture, and the word of God written, be that book whereby men shall be judged at the last; then surely it is our duty in special manner to take heed thereunto.

5. As the Scripture is that book whereby we shall all be judged; so it shall be established upon us, if we be not established by it: for says the apostle, Heb. ii, "If the word spoken by angels were stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience, received a just recompense of reward; how

verbo ne in paradiso operatim vivere at cum verbo etiam in inferno facile est vivere.

Est verbum talis thesaurus qui tractando crescit et distribuendo servando autem perit.– Luther.

* Scriptura est communis animarum officina.—Basil.

Omnipotentis epistola ad homines missa.—Gregory.

τροφη ψυχης nutrimentum et cibus animæ.—Athanasius.

shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by his Son?" What then? "Therefore we ought to give the more heed to the things we have heard, lest we let them slip." Why? For if we be unstedfast, yet the word of God is stedfast. The word that God spake by Moses was stedfast, and established upon them that disobeyed; so now, much more, says he, if you be not stedfast and established by the word, it shall be established upon you unto your destruction. Oh, what infinite reason is there then, that we should take heed thereunto.

But the text saith, "That we shall do well to take heed thereunto, until the day dawn, and day-star arise in our hearts:" but the day hath dawned on me, and the day-star hath arisen in my heart; and therefore now, what need I take heed to the Scripture or the written word any longer?

I answer, Yea, still you have need to do it: for did not the day dawn, and the day star arise on the hearts of the apostles and christians in their days, according to your sense and meaning? yet they still attended on the written word of God. Surely, therefore, the meaning of the text is not according to that conjecture. Some therefore would have the words to be read thus: "Until the day star arise on your hearts;" and so think they are spoken of the day of judgment, concerning which time Paul says, 1 Cor. iv. 5, "that Christ will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart." But as ye have heard in the explication of the text, the word *until*, in Scripture phrase, is not always taken exclusively: for example, David saith, Ps. lvii. 1, "My soul trusteth in thee, O God, and in the shadow of thy wings will I trust, until this calamity be overpast."* What, would David trust in God no longer? Yes, but he would do it especially whilst that calamity continued. So in the cxxiiird Psalm he saith, "Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us." What would they wait on God no longer? Yes, but in their distress especially. So Cant. ii. 16, 17, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine, he feedeth among the lilies, until the day break."

* עד emphatice solet sumi pro ועד etiam donec et continuitatem significare seu consecutionem non exceptionem vel exclusionem futuri temporis.—Genebrad. in Psalm cix.

What, doth Christ feed among the lilies no longer; will he not feed among the lilies after the day break? Yes, but the word *till*, or *until*, is not always to be taken exclusively. And I will give you but one scripture for it, amongst many in the New Testament, Matt. xii. 20, "A bruised reed will he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench, until he bring forth judgment unto victory." What, will Christ break the bruised reed then, and quench the smoking flax after he hath brought judgment to victory? No, but the word *until*, in Scripture phrase, is not always to be taken exclusively. And so here in this text, "Ye do well that ye take heed to the word of prophecy, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:" not that then you should cease taking heed to the word, but because you are now in the dark, now, and now especially ye are to take heed thereunto.*

But why are the saints and people of God to take heed unto the Scripture and the written word of God especially in their dark times and seasons?

I answer, Because they are then in most danger of stumbling and falling: he that walketh in the dark, stumbleth; and who is not then apt to fall? But by taking heed to this sure light, they shall be kept from the power of their darkness. The Scripture tells us of darkness and of the power of darkness. A good man may be in the dark, but he is kept from the power of it by taking heed unto this great and most sure light; yea, though he be in the darkness of some error, for the greatest errors lie nearest the sweetest truths; and though he do not see that truth for the present, yet, if he do take heed unto the word, the sweetness of that truth shall ooze through the error, and preserve and keep him from the power of it. But if ye look into 2 Tim. iii., ye shall find the apostle doth inform Timothy of very sad and dark times, that shall be in the latter days: verse 1, "In the last days, perilous times shall come." 1. He tells him wherein the peril of these times shall consist. 2. He tells him the signs thereof. 3. He comforts him under it. 4. He shews how he and we may be kept from the power of that darkness: "In the last days, perilous times shall come; for (saith he) men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud,

* Hac enim particular ער donec Scriptura atque adeo lingua Hebraica affirmat quod in dubitationem possit incidere.—Genebrad. in Psalm cix.

blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, having a form of godliness," &c. verses 2—5. It seems, then, that men may be thus wicked, yet may bear up to a form of godliness. 2. He tells Timothy the signs of these perilous times, and who these persons are; "Such as creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with divers lusts; (verse 6) who also shall resist the truth in the ministry, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses," verse 8. 3. He comforts him against the evil of these dark times; verse 9, "But they shall proceed no further, for their folly or madness shall be manifest to all men." 4. He directs him, and us by him, how to stand and hold fast, verse 14, and that is two ways: First, by avoiding and turning away from these corrupt men: verse 5, "From such turn away," speak not to them or with them; go not to them, but turn away from them. Secondly, By taking heed to the word of God preached and written: verse 14, "But continue thou in the things that thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise to salvation." So that here the apostle doth refer him both to the word preached and written; as if he should say, The only way to be kept from seducers (verse 13, "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith,") is to take heed unto the Scripture. And indeed, what is the reason that so many in these days of ours are deceived, but because they do not take heed unto this great and most sure light. This is that great and most excellent light which we are to take heed unto at all times, but especially in our dark times and places, and thus we shall be preserved.

But if this be such a preservative against the power of darkness, why then are so many men in the dark, who do not run to Scripture? What heretic is there, or ever was, who did not plead and lay claim to Scripture?

I answer, All heretics do not lay claim to Scripture: some deny the Scripture, some do not: some, as Theodoret observes of the heretics in his time, will make use of those scriptures which seem to make for them, but as for those scriptures which are plainly against them they reject, and if

close pressed, will deny the very body of the Scripture as any rule to them.*

But it is one thing to cite Scripture and another thing to take heed thereunto. The devil cited Scripture to our Saviour Christ, but he did not take heed unto it as to his rule of life. If we take heed thereto, then we shall be kept and preserved by it, even from the power of that darkness which we may labour under. And thus now I have done with the fourth general thing propounded, and have cleared the doctrine.

If this doctrine be true, then what cause have we to bless God and not to despise human learning. Mistake not, I shall not go about to preach up human learning in the church of God; but though I do not preach up the excellency of meat, drink and clothing, or outward blessings, yet I may call upon you and myself not to despise the same, but to bless God for them. So though I do not preach up the excellency of human learning, yet I may call upon you and myself not to despise the same, but to bless God for it. For if Scripture light be so excellent a light, and the word of God written, that whereunto we are all to take heed; then what a mercy and blessing is it, that this word and Scripture is translated into the English tongue. It was not first written in English, but in Hebrew and Greek; it could not have been brought forth into English, but by the help of human learning; and will ye then despise human learning, and not bless God for it? Oh, ye wanton hearts, remember how the poor martyrs in Queen Mary's time, did bless God for the English translation; and how could that be without human learning? Then let us bless God for it, and not despise it.

If this doctrine be true, namely, that Scripture light is so great a light, which all are to take heed unto; then what a sad condition are those in, who do deny and forsake the Scripture? they are in the dark indeed. I confess a good man may be tempted, as to other sins, so to this, to doubt of the truth of the Scripture. But do I hear a man that hath been a professor, one that hath known God and his

* Οταν ειδωσι μεν την εαυτων κφεοφροσυνην. Si videant petitis e Scripturæ demonstrationibus stultitiam suam constringi, tum Scripturæ recusant et scopum et usum; si quando vero putant sibi favere nudum aliquod effatum a genuina recisum orationis serie ad suum propositum accommodant suis confirmandis.—Theod. Opus. contra Hereses quæ sunt, in 2 tom. oper. Athanas.

ways, one that is under no temptation; do I hear such an one denying the Scripture as any rule to him? Write that man childless, write him faithless, without Christ, and without God in this world. Ah, poor soul, here is one whose foundations are plucked up, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. Oh, the sad condition of this poor creature, he hath forsaken the light, and now is under the power of darkness. Whither should he go, for he hath left the words of eternal life? yet, Lord, how many have these times brought forth, that are come to this height of wickedness! But, beloved, I do not only hope, but am assured better things of you; only hear the word of exhortation, and that is,

Take heed and attend to the Scriptures, for they are our great and most sure light, whereunto ye do well if ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place. Oh, then take heed thereunto.

What must we do, that we may take heed and attend unto Scripture?

Ye must do three things. I. Ye must attend to know and understand it. II. Ye must attend to keep it. And, III. Ye must attend to walk by the same. And,

I. For your knowledge in and understanding of the Scripture, and the written word of God, ye must,

1. Observe, keep, and hold fast the letter of it; for though the letter of the Scripture be not the word alone, yet the letter with the true sense and meaning of it, is the word. The body of a man is not the man; but the body and soul together, make up the whole man: the soul alone or the body alone is not the man. So here, though the letter of the Scripture alone, do not make up the word; yet the letter and sense together do. And if ye destroy the body, ye destroy the man; so if ye destroy the letter of the Scripture, you do destroy the Scripture: and if you deny the letter, how is it possible that you should attain to the true sense thereof, when the sense lies wrapped up in the letters and the words thereof? *

But if I attend to the letter in my practice, then I shall be a professor of the letter; and if a preacher do attend to the letter, then he shall be a minister of the letter.

* אות &c. בחורח in lego sine Scripturis non est litera a qua non pendent magni montes doctrinarum.—Rabbini.

Not so. For when the apostle saith, "We are not ministers of the letter, but of the Spirit;" his meaning plainly there, is, not of the law, but of the gospel; for in that 2 Cor. iii. he calls the ministration of the law, the letter; and the whole ministration of the gospel, the Spirit. Those therefore that preach or walk according to the ministration of the law, are ministers and professors of the letter; those that preach or walk according to the ministration of the gospel, are ministers and professors of the Spirit: and therefore those that depart from and despise the ministration of the gospel, do depart from and do despite to the Spirit. It is one thing for a man to keep the letter of the Scripture, so as not to deny the same; another thing to keep to the letter only for the meaning of it. It is one thing to preach from the letter, another thing to preach the letter. Our Lord and Saviour Christ, when he expounded that Isa. lxi., as ye read Luke iv., did not preach the letter, yet he preached from the letter. So now, we may preach from the letter of the Scripture, yet not preach the letter, or be ministers of the letter; and you may practise the word from the letter of the Scripture, and yet not be professors of the letter, that is, of the law, and the ministration of it.

How can we hold and keep fast the letter of the Scripture, when there are so many Greek copies of the New Testament, and those diverse one from another?

Yes, well; for though there are many received copies of the New Testament, yet there is no material difference between them. The four Evangelists do vary in the relation of the same thing; yet because there is no contradiction, or material variation, we do adhere to all of them, and deny none. In the times of the Jews, before Christ, they had but one original of the Old Testament, yet that hath several readings: there is a marginal reading, and a line reading, and they differ no less than eight hundred times the one from the other; yet the Jews did adhere to both, and denied neither. Why? Because there was no material difference. And so now, though there be many copies of the New Testament, yet seeing there is no material difference between them, we may adhere to all: for whoever will understand the Scripture, must be sure to keep and hold fast the letter, not denying it.

2. If you would have the true knowledge, and understand the Scripture, and so behold this great light in its full glory and brightness; you must diligently inquire into the true sense and meaning of it, for the true sense and meaning is the soul thereof. Now the Scripture, or the word of God written, may be expounded; for Ezra stood up before the people in a pulpit, and gave the sense of the Scripture. Christ himself is said to expound: and 2 Peter i. 20, "No scripture is of any private interpretation." The word επιλυπς signifies, exposition; it is the same word that is used in Luke iv., "Christ stood up, and expounded." Now, saith the apostle, "No Scripture is of any private exposition;" therefore it may be expounded. And if not, why were gifts given to men by the ascension of Christ? It is a very dangerous thing to bear false witness against the truth of Christ. Now if a man do not take heed unto the true sense and meaning of the Scripture, but will rigidly adhere to the letter of the Scripture, he may quickly bear false witness against the truth. Mark xiv. 56, it is said, "that many did bear false witness against Christ, but their witness agreed not together." But how did they bear false witness? They testified that Christ said, "I can destroy the temple of God, and build it again in three days;" which our Saviour Christ spake of his body, they applied to the temple of the Jews, and so they are said to bear false witness. Why? Because they kept to his words only, and not to his sense and meaning. So that we had need take heed how we report the words of Christ; though we do adhere to his words, yet if we keep not to his meaning, we shall be found false witnesses against him and his truth. "Search the Scriptures," saith our Saviour: why search? even because the sense and meaning doth lie deep. And therefore it is not enough for us that we do adhere to the words, but we must diligently inquire into the true sense and the meaning of them.

But one Scripture hath many senses; a literal sense, and a spiritual sense; a literal sense, and a mystical. How shall we be able then, to find out the true sense and the meaning of it?

Nay, but the same Scripture hath but one entire sense. Indeed Papists tell us, that one Scripture hath many senses;*

* Excipiendus est Michael Modina.

but the Protestants hold, that there is but one entire sense of a Scripture, though divers applications of it. As for example, the Old Testament says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox;" which the apostle applies to the maintenance of the ministers. The sense is but one in divers parts, thus: as the mouth of the ox is not to be muzzled, so ministry is to be maintained. There is but one whole sense of a scripture, though divers parts and applications of it.

Though the sense of the Scripture be but one entire sense, yet sometimes the Scripture is to be understood literally, sometimes figuratively and metaphorically; but always spiritually, for when it is taken literally, it is taken spiritually: for, says the apostle, "If thy brother offend thee, heap coals of fire upon his head;" that is not to be taken literally, but metaphorically. So when our Saviour saith, "If thine eye, or hand, or foot offend thee, pull it out, and cut it off;" this is not to be understood literally, but metaphorically.

Though the Scripture be applied mystically sometimes, and doth receive a mystical application; yet for your direction herein, ye must know,

That there is no fundamental doctrine of our salvation, but is laid down plainly and without mysticalness: the covenants of the law, "Thou shalt have no other god but me;" and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" faith in Christ, and love to our neighbour: all the fundamental doctrines of our salvation are laid down plainly and literally.

Though the great matters of our salvation be expressed plainly and literally, yet if the literal sense of any scripture be contrary to common sense or reason, or to modesty, honesty and good manners, then we are to balk the literal sense: for example, our Saviour saith, "This is my body," in the Lord's supper; if these words be taken literally, it is against common sense and reason; therefore you must balk the literal sense, and understand them otherwise. Again, the Lord commanded the prophet to go naked; if this be understood literally, it would be against common modesty. So when our Saviour saith, "If thine eye offend thee, pull it out; if thine hand offend thee, cut it off:" if this be understood literally, it would fight with that commandment. "Thou shalt

not kill:" therefore the literal sense is sometimes to be balked.

Though we are not always to adhere to the bare letter for the meaning of the words, yet if the words be applied mystically, ye are not to make a force upon the history; mystery doth not destroy the history. The history of the two women Hagar and Sarah, is by the apostle applied to the two Testaments; yet this doth not destroy the history; for as words are the substractum of the history, so history is the substractum of the mystery. Some, when they have attained to the mystical application, do deny the history; but remember, that though the words of the Scripture be applied mystically, yet the mystery is never to destroy the history.*

And though the words of Scripture be sometimes applied mystically, yet you must know that there is nothing mystical in one scripture but is literally set down in another scripture. Let any man shew me any truth set down mystically in one place, but I will shew it literally expressed in another. Some would have all the Scripture to be understood mystically; but doth any man tell you that this and that scripture is not literally but mystically to be understood, then let him shew you where the same truth is set down literally in another place, else you may not believe him: and if you walk by this rule and rules, you shall walk safely here, and in some good measure be helped to the true sense and meaning of the Scripture in this case.†

But suppose that a scripture lie under controversy: one lays claim to it for his opinion, and another lays claim to it for his opinion; how shall I be able to understand the true sense and meaning of it? Or suppose I be in the dark, in a

* In interpretatione Scripturæ sacræ illud apprime observandum est ne ulla vis inferatur literali.—August. de quivos. Disput. de sensu Scripturæ.

Verborum sacræ Scripturæ Germana intelligentia imprimis quærenda et instituenda, non quod tropo logicum intelligentia condemnemus sed quod spiritualis interpretatio sequi debet ordinem historiæ, quod plerique ignorantes, lymphatico in sacra Scriptura vagantur errore.—Hieronym. in cap. xiii. Isa.

† Quis autem non impudentissime nitatur aliquid quod in allegoria positum est, per se interpretari nisi et manifesta habeat testimonia quorum lumine illustrantur obscura.—Austin. Epist. 48, ad Vincent. Donat.

Si animus est allegoriam texere vide imprimis, ut interpretationis ejus quam meditaris sententia alibi in Scripturis clare et absque tropo expresso inveniatur atque detracto velamine analogiæ fidei respondeat.—Flac. Illyric. pars altera Tract. i. de ratione cognoscendi Scripturas, observ. 2.

dark estate and condition, how shall I so take heed unto the scripture that I may know and understand the same?

I answer, Something you must do by way of observation; something by way of practice.

As for observation, in case you be able, you must consult the original; for as old Mr. Dod once answered to a young man enquiring of him what was the best commentary upon the Scripture; The original, the Hebrew and the Greek text, said he, is the best commentary. So say I; the very text in the original doth sometimes put an end to the controversy. As for example, the apostle saith of women, "They shall be saved by child-bearing;" which some books read thus, "They shall be saved by bearing of children:" whereupon a controversy arises, whether those followings words, "If they continue in the faith," do relate to children or to women; whereas if men looked into the original, they should find that the word is but one, in the singular, according to our translation, "They shall be saved by child-bearing," * and therefore the following words must relate unto women. Therefore it is good to consult with the original; and though you cannot understand Hebrew or Greek, yet you may consult with the original, and not pin your faith upon another's learning: for if you ask three or four how such or such a verse should be translated, and they do all agree in their translation for the substance, you know that so it is in the original, not because such a man doth say so, but because of their agreement, which could not be, if it were not so in truth.

If you would understand the true sense and meaning of a controverted scripture, then look well into the coherence, the scope, and the context thereof; for as the Hebrew Rabbin says well, There is no objection can arise upon the text, but there is an answer in the sides thereof: † for example, the papists urge that place of the iind of James for justification

* Δια της τεκνογονιας εαν μεινωσιν, &c. per filiorum generationem, si manserint.—Montanus.

Per natos suos, si manserint.—Syriac.

† Nulla est objectio in lege, quæ non habet solutionem in latere.

Turpe est de lege judicare tota lege nondum inspecta.

Quis, scopus, impellens, sedes, tempusque, locusque.

Et modus hæc septem Scripturæ attendito lector.

Vide Explicat. in Glass. Philog. Sacr. Lib. ii. p. 2, de Scripturæ sensu emendo, page 503.

by works; whereas if we look diligently into the coherence and the scope thereof, we shall find that the apostle speaks of the work of faith in opposition to the profession of faith, for says he, verse 14, "What will it profit, my brethren, if a man say he have faith, and have not works, will it save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and in want (verse 15), and one of you say, Depart in peace, and be warmed and filled; if you give him not what is good for the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith if it have not works is dead." A man may say he hath faith; but the devils say and believe there is one God. Was not Abraham justified by works when he offered Isaac? That faith that justified Abraham was not a bare profession of faith, but it was a working faith; the profession of faith alone doth not justify, but it is a faith which consists in a work, it is a working faith: this is the scope of the place then, as appears by the coherence. If a scripture, therefore, do lie under controversy, take you the Bible, and look well unto the scope and the coherence of the text controverted.

If you would understand the Scripture rightly, then compare one Scripture with another; for, says the apostle, "No Scripture is of private interpretation; or rather thus, no Scripture is of our own exposition, την ιδιας επιλυσεως; "But holy men of God wrote it as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost." Is the Scripture therefore doubtful in one place? then compare it with another; stand not upon your own apprehension, for it is not of our own exposition. It came not by the will of man, but divers holy men wrote it as they were inspired with the Holy Ghost; and therefore if one place be doubtful, it is to be compared with another.

And be sure that you swerve not from the proportion of faith; for says the apostle, Rom. xii, "Or if any man prophesy, let it be according to the proportion or analogy of faith." And what is that, but the sum and grounds of religion, or the body of divinity, which is delivered to us in the form of sound words, whereunto we are delivered. Thus in case the Scripture lie under any controversy, it will be good for you to observe these rules.

II. But secondly, and more pratically: if you would so understand the Scripture, that you may take heed thereunto, as to a light shining in your dark state, then—

You must go to God for the Spirit; for without it, ye cannot understand the mind of God in the Scripture: no man knows the mind of Paul, but by the Spirit of Paul; nor the mind of Peter, but by the Spirit of Peter; no man knows the mind of Christ, but by the Spirit of Christ: stand therefore under gospel dispensations, where the Spirit breathes. So says the apostle, "Received ye the Spirit by the law, or by the hearing of faith?" And seeing God hath promised to give this Spirit unto them that ask it, go unto God for the same.*

Take heed of a worldly, fleshly mind; fleshly sins do exceedingly blind the mind from the things of God; and a worldly mind cannot savour them. Ye see how it is in the eclipse of the moon, when the earth comes between the sun and the moon, then the moon is eclipsed, because the earth keeps the light of the sun from it. So if the earth and the world, come between you and the truth, there will be an eclipse, and darkness upon all your soul: "Then shall ye know (saith our Saviour) of my doctrine, whether it be of God, if ye do what I command you." Those that will not do what they know, shall not know what to do.†

Study your condition by the Scripture, and the Scripture by your condition; condition gives understanding.‡ In case you be under a temptation, study those scriptures that do concern such temptation; if you be in an affliction, study those scriptures that do concern such afflictions; if you be in a desertion, study those scriptures which do concern such desertions: and whatever your condition be, study those scriptures which do concern your condition, and this will help you to understand the scriptures.

Yet take heed that you be not too indulgent to your own

* Quo spiritu Scripturæ factæ sunt eo spiritu legendæ, nunquam ingredieris in sensum Pauli, nisi spiritum Pauli imbiberis.

Omnia dona a Deo Patre luminum.

Christi munus est aperire Scripturas, Luc. 24. Spiritus sanctus author simul et Explicator Scripturæ. John xvi.

† Perfectio intellectualis operationis in homine consistit in quadam abstractione a sensibilium phantasmatibus et ideo quando intellectus hominis, magis fuerit liber ab eujusmodi phantasmat. tanto potius considerare intelligibilia poterit.– Ergo.

Hebitudo sensus circa intelligentiam oritur ex gula cæcitas mentis ex luxuria. Aquin. 22. Q. 15. A. 3.

Cum non faciunt quæ intelligunt non intelligent quæ faciant.

‡ Conditio dat Intellectum.

condition, disposition, or opinion. It is a good speech of Hilary;* he is the best interpreter of scripture, that doth rather bring his sense from the scripture, than carry his sense to the scripture. We are very apt to interpret scripture according to our own opinion or disposition. Interpretation ordinarily follows disposition, or opinion: as when there was a great controversy in the Popish church, betwixt the two liturgies of Ambrose and Gregory; by common consent of both parties, it was agreed, that both the mass books should be laid on the altar, expecting the decision of the matter by revelation: and the doors being opened the next morning, Gregory's mass book was rent and torn in many pieces, and scattered abroad in the place; but Ambrose's lay whole, and open upon the altar, which some thought signified thus much; that Gregory's mass-book should be cancelled; others, as the Pope himself, said, Nay, but this renting and scattering of the leaves, signified the dispersing of it over all the Christian world. Thus men interpret things, according to their own dispositions and opinions, even when they come to Scripture also. Would you therefore see clearly into the mind of God in the scripture? then, as when you come to Christ for righteousness, ye come with naked shoulders; so when you come to the truth of Christ, take heed heed of your own disposition and opinion: you must come to Christ as a prophet, as well as to Christ as a priest, with naked shoulders.

If you do desire so to understand the scripture, as it may be a light to all your paths; then be sure that you put nothing else in commission with it for your rule. It is with the scripture in this respect, as with God, Christ, and the Spirit; if you come to God for help, yet if you join another god in commission with him, he will not give down his help: so if you join any thing with Christ in the matter of mediation, though you come to him, he will not give in the comfort of his mediation to you: so for the Spirit, though you come unto him for comfort, being the Comforter; yet if you join any thing else in commission with the Spirit, it will not give down his comfort. And so here: though you come, and tend, and wait upon God in the Scripture; yet if there be any thing else which you do make your joint rule with the

* Optimus Scripturæ interpres hic est, qui sensum e Scriptura potius retulerit, quam attulerit.—Hilar.

scripture, any light within you, or precept of man without you, it will not give down its light to you, but you will be left in the dark. Do you desire therefore, to understand and know the true sense and meaning of the scripture? then take heed that you join no other thing in commission with it, as to the matter of your rule. And thus I have done with the first thing that we must do in taking heed to the scripture; we must take heed to know and understand the same.

If you would so take heed unto the scripture, as it may be indeed a light unto you in a dark place, then you must keep it; for though the meat be never so good, yet if the stomach throw it up presently, and do not keep it, it doth the man no good. So in regard of the scripture: therefore saith the apostle, Heb. ii. 1., "We ought to take the more earnest heed unto the things that we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, or run out:" we must keep what we have, we must keep what we know, else we do not take heed word.

Now that may keep, and not forsake the word,

1. Observe what those things are, whereby men have been led off, and carried away from the Scripture, and above all things take heed of them. Now those are three especially.

Sometimes this evil doth arise from the corruptions of a man's nature, boiled up to a secret unperceived malice against the word and Scripture. As in case two professors be at variance, and a third person stand by and saith, Do you see these professors, what proud, wrangling people these are, they are all such; doth not this argue, that this third man hath an aching tooth at profession? So when men shall observe some variations in Scripture, and they shall say, do ye see what contradictions there are? they are all so. What doth this argue, but that these men have an aching tooth, and secret malice at the good word of God, or the Scripture. You know how it was with Moses, when he saw two men fighting, one an Egyptian, and another an Israelite, he killed the Egyptian; but when he saw two Hebrews fighting, now, saith he, will I go and reconcile them, for they are brethren; why so, but because he was a good man, and gracious? So also it is with a gracious heart; when he sees the Scripture fighting with an Egyptian, an heathen author, or apocryphal, he comes and kills the heathen, he kills the Egyptian, or the

apocrypha: but when he sees two Scriptures at variance (in view, though in truth not) Oh, saith he, these are brethren, and they may be reconciled, I will labour all I can to reconcile them; but when a man shall take every advantage of seeming difference in Scripture, to say, Do ye see what contradictions there are in this book, and not labour to reconcile them; what doth this argue, but that the corruption of a man's nature, is boiled up to an unknown malice against the word of the Lord: take heed therefore of that.

Sometimes this evil of denying, and forsaking the Scripture, doth arise from corrupt principles, which have been bred up in the minds of men, as sometimes men think that the light and law within them, is their rule; and therefore what need the Scripture as my rule any longer? Sometimes men think that all Scripture is to be expounded mystically, and so, first they make a nose of wax of it, and then they cast it away. Sometimes men think that they are to judge of doctrines by impressions, visions, voices, and dreams, and so they cast away the Scripture. Would ye therefore take heed unto the word, so as to keep the same; take heed of this ill principle.*

Sometimes this evil doth arise from dalliance, and playing about the borders and confines of this sin: it is in this sin, as with other sins; though a man hate and abhor swearing, drunkenness, and adultery; yet if he lie playing and dallying upon the borders thereof he will surely fall into them. So, though I say, God forbid that ever I should deny the Scripture, yet if I lay playing upon the confines of this sin, I shall certainly fall into it. It is an excellent speech that Luther hath, Will any man play? let him play with his wife, play with his children, play with his money; but let him take heed how he plays with the Scripture, by turning all

* Donatistæ jactantes veram Ecclesiam penes se solos esse qui habitabant regionem meridionalem ad id confirmandum adducebant illud Canticorum, 1. v. 6. Judica mihi (quem diligit anima mea) ubi pascas, ubi cubes in meridie ne vagari incipiam post greges sodalium tuorem; si ita (inquit Aug. Epist. 43.) exponendam putatis sacram Scripturam Aquilonares profecto Ecclesiæ dicent se solas esse veras, adducent enim per se illud Pf. 47. 3. Exulta mons Sion lætera Aquilonis civitas Regis magni, Deus in domibus ejus cognoscitur cum suscipiet eam, ergo in expositione Sacrarum Scripturarum ante omnia inveniendus est sensus literalis eo namque constituto facilis ad mysticos sensus patebit aditus clypeus Concionat. Verbi Dei per Ferdinand de Escalante Lib. i. cap. 17.

into mysticalness; for who is it that dares play with the thunder? Why? (says he) for it is the voice of God. So is the Scripture, it is the voice of God. Would ye therefore, so take heed unto it, as to keep it, and not deny the same? Then take heed of that corruption of nature which doth boil up to malice; take heed of evil principles about the rule of your life; and take heed of playing with Scripture, and of living upon the confines of that great sin of denying it, lest God in just judgment, give you up at last to the gross evil of it.

2. And for particular truths of the Scripture, that you may keep them in your heart and judgment, consider,—

Whether that doctrine, which you are now about to deny be not that doctrine which hath seven times passed through the fire in the sufferings of the saints? whether it be not that doctrine which many saints have lost their estates, liberties, and their blood for? And if it be so, then think with yourself, how hard a thing it will be for you to be saved, denying that truth which so many have shed their blood for.

Consider also, whether the doctrine you are now about to deny, be not that doctrine which the saints generally have maintained in opposition to the world? And if it be, then think with yourself how hard a thing it will be for you to be saved, denying that doctrine which all the saints generally have maintained against the world: but above all, take heed of an itching ear. The apostle tells Timothy, 2 Epist. iv. 3. "That the times should come, wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own wills, shall heap up to themselves, teachers, having itching ears," such as shall not be contented with the settled ministry of God's appointment, but shall, after their own wills, heap up teachers to themselves; and this they shall do from the itch of the ear: well but what shall this itch in the ear bring forth? verse 4. "They shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Now therefore, that you may keep, and hold fast the word in the particular doctrines, oh, then take heed of this itching ear.

III. Yet one thing more. If you would take heed to the Scripture, you must so heed the same, as you may walk thereby.

Therefore prize it much: who takes heed to that which he

does not prize? The martyrs in queen Mary's days, prized the written word of God much: one gave a cart load of hay for one leaf of the Bible in English: another being at sea, and swimming for his life on a mast, and having all his estate, which was five pounds, in one hand, and the Bible in the other, and being compelled to part with one, chose rather for to keep the Bible, and to throw away his five pounds, all that he had. These then did prize the written word of God, and they did walk thereby.

Therefore also, get your heart affected with love to every truth which you know; for because men receive not the truth in the love thereof, therefore God doth give them up to strong delusions: men take heed unto what they love.

And therefore that you may heed it so as to walk thereby, let it be your continual companion, going where you go; if you go into the fields, oh! let the word go with you; if into your calling, oh! let the Scripture and the written word of God be with you. Thus shall you take heed unto it, as to a light shining in a dark place. And I pray tell me, are not these times dark times? The conjunction of clouds and miseries make dark times. Now the world is full of wars and rumours of wars: now men say, Lo, here is Christ, and, Lo, there is Christ; insomuch as, if possible, the elect would be deceived. Now spiritual judgments and outward miseries are in conjunction; a cloud and a cloud, a conjunction of clouds: surely, therefore, these times must be dark times. The eclipses of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars from heaven make dark times: and when were there more eclipses, and falling of the stars, and of great lights from heaven, than in these days of ours? False lights also make dark times, for the more false lights are set up the more men are drawn from the true light, and so the more they are in darkness. And when ever were there so many false lights hung forth as in these days of ours? Surely, therefore, these are dark times; and if so, what cause have we all to take heed unto the word, which is as a light shining in a dark place. What I therefore say to one, I say to you all, and to my own soul; Oh, let us all take heed thereunto. And if any think that he is not at all in the dark, he is therefore in the dark, because he thinks he is not in the dark. If any think these

things concern not him, they do therefore the more concern him than others, because he thinks they concern him not. Think therefore on all these things, and the Lord give you a clear understanding in all things.

THE

RIGHTEOUS MAN'S HABITATION

IN THE TIME OF

PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE;

BEING A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THE

NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

"Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name sake lead me, and guide me."
—Psalm xxxi. 2, 3.

THE

RIGHTEOUS MAN'S HABITATION.

PSALM XCI.

" 1. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

2. *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust.*

3. *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: and from the noisome pestilence.*

4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*

5. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day.*

6. *Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.*

7. *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee.*

8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked.*

9. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation.*

10. *There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*

11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

13. *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.*

14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*

15. *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.*

16. *With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*"

THIS Psalm, it is thought, was made upon the occasion of the plague and pestilence that was in David's time (so Mo-

lerus); wherein you have the best antidote against the plague and pestilence. The whole Psalm is nothing else but a great promise of special protection for those that trust in the Lord in the time of the plague; wherein three or four things are most especially considerable: the evil, danger and misery of the plague or pestilence; protection and deliverance promised in the time thereof; the persons upon whom the promise is entailed; the way, mode, means and manner, how God will deliver and protect in the time of a plague. As for the evil, danger and misery of the plague or pestilence, you have it in many terms expressed in several verses. In the third verse it is called the snare of the fowler; "he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler;" it is called the snare of the fowler, because it takes men before they are aware; the word *and* that follows, should not be in the line, so the next words do explain it; "He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: from the noisome pestilence;" then it is called the noisome pestilence. In the Hebrew it is called the pestilence of woes or calamity, that is, most calamitous pestilence, that disease or sickness, that is accompanied with the most calamity. In the fifth verse it is called "the terror by night," and the "arrow that flieth by day;" for with this arrow God doth kill and hit men at a distance, a great way off, when they think to fly away and be at rest. It is said in the sixth verse, that it "walketh in darkness;" and it is called "destruction that wasteth at noon-day," in regard of the spreading and infective nature of it. At the thirteenth verse it is compared unto "the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon," for the destructive and devouring nature of it, which nothing can stand before.

Secondly, as for the protection promised in the time thereof, you have that in the general at the first verse, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty:" more particularly at the third verse, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: from the noisome pestilence, he shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler," at the fourth verse. At the fifth and sixth verses again, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the

destruction that wasteth at noon-day." And again, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: (in the seventh verse) but it shall not come nigh thee." In the tenth verse, "No evil shall befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." And at the last verse, "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."

As for the persons whom this promise of protection is entailed upon, they are such as "do trust in the Lord. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High; that say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in him I will trust," verse 2. And at the ninth verse, "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day," at the fifth verse. And as for the means and way, and mode how God will deliver in the time of the plague, he will do it by his angels; "There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands," &c.

From all which, then, I take up this doctrine or observation: though the danger, evil, and misery of the pestilence be exceeding great, yet God will in an especial manner protect and deliver those that do trust in him in the time of a plague.

For the clearing and prosecution whereof, first of all, I shall a little labour to show you that the evil, misery, and danger of a plague is exceedingly great. Secondly, That yet the Lord will protect and deliver those that do trust in him. Thirdly, What that faith is, and what that trust is, that God hath promised this protection to in the time of a plague. Fourthly, I would answer to some objections, questions, or cases of conscience. Then, Fifthly, show how and by what means God will protect and deliver in the time of a plague. Then call upon you and myself, to do our duty in this day.

As for the first, I shall not be long in it. The misery and danger of the plague is sufficiently known. It is called the

plague above all other diseases, as if it were the plague of plagues.

The several and particular judgments and evils that fell upon Pharoah, they were called plagues, they were all plagues; but now the pestilence carries the name of *the* plague, as if that of all other diseases, were the plague of plagues.

It is, first of all, a most dreadful and terrible disease: it is here called in this Psalm, "the terror by night," fifth verse, "thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night." Terror by night; why? the night itself is a time of fear and terror: darkness brings fear; but the plague is the night of nights and the king of terrors. How do men quake and tremble, and fly away at the noise of this? the report of this? When God appeared in his greatness, majesty, and glory, gave a terrible apearance of himself; it is said in the third of Habakkuk, that the pestilence went before him; in the third verse, "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise, and his brightness was as the light. He had horns coming out of his hand and there was the hiding of his power." In the fifth verse, "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet." Before him went the pestilence, as his officer and executioner. When the Lord doth set forth his terrible appearance, thus he sets it forth, "The pestilence went before him." Without all doubt it is that disease that is most dreadful and terrible. And, secondly, as it is the most dreadful and terrible disease, so it is the most painful disease. The more suddenly any man is taken away in his strength, the more painful is his disease he dies of: a man that is spent with sickness, he is easily blown out; but when a man in his full strength shall suddenly die, it costs him a great deal of pain. Thus it is, when the plague takes one away in his full strength in a little time, therefore it is a very painful disease; and as it is a very painful disease, so it is an uncomfortable disease; then all friends leave us, then a man or woman sit and lie all alone, and is a stranger to the breath of his own relations. If a man be sick of a fever, it is some comfort that he can take a bed-staff and knock, and his servant comes up and helps him with a cordial. But if a man be sick of the plague, then he

sits and lies all alone; it is the most uncomfortable disease; and as it is that disease that is most uncomfortable, so it is that disease that is most mortal, and therefore of all other diseases it is called death. In the sixth of the Revelation, we read of the sword and famine, in the former part of the chapter; but in the eighth verse, "And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death." The sword is spoken of plainly before, in the fourth verse, "And there went out another horse, that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword;" there is the sword: then at the sixth verse there is a famine, "I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny:" now at the eighth verse comes on the pestilence, and that is called death; not the sword, or famine, but the plague, is that which hath the name of death; because of all other diseases it is the most mortal; and as it is the most mortal disease, so it is the most unavoidable disease. It may be avoided through the goodness of God; but I speak comparatively, of all diseases it is the most unavoidable. And it is the disease that is the most emptying disease; it empties houses, and it empties towns, and empties cities. God threatens to empty a nation, as a man empties a dish, and wipes it, and turns it upside down. So to a family it is the most emptying disease of all other. But I will not stay here; it is too manifest that this evil, misery, and danger of a plague is exceeding great.

But yet, in the second place, there are a generation whom God will protect and deliver in the day of a plague. It was always so in the most desolating judgments: when the flood came, there was Noah and his house spared; and when Sodom was destroyed, there was Lot and his house preserved and delivered. In the sixth chapter of Isaiah, ye read of a desolation that looks like a plague: "Then, said I, Lord, how long? And he answered (at the eleventh verse) until the cities be wasted and without inhabitant, and the houses be without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away:" yet, says he, at the thirteenth verse, "There shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten as a teyle tree, and as an oak, whose substance is

in them," &c. yet there is a generation whom the Lord will preserve and deliver in such a general desolation as this. But who are these? This Psalm tells us, "they are such as do trust in the Lord," those that trust in the Lord in the time of a plague.

But why is there such a promise of protection entailed upon those that trust in the Lord in the time of a plague? Why, first of all, God will be all that to us which we make him, and build upon him for: as in Psalm xxxi. 2, 3, "Be thou my rock, for thou art my rock, be thou my defence, for thou art my fortress:" in the latter end of the second verse, "Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me, for thou art my rock and my fortress." Lord, be that unto me, which I build upon thee for. Thou art my rock, therefore be my rock: this is his argument. Now, by faith and trusting in the Lord, we do make God our protector, and therefore he will be a protector to those that trust unto him in time of a plague.

Those that honour providence, shall be kept by providence. Jacob, what a wonderful great estate he attained unto! he presented Esau with a present fit for a king to give. How came he by this great estate? There was a controversy betwixt Laban and him, and he puts the business upon providence, and providence made him rich: those that honour providence, shall be kept by providence. Faith and trusting in God in the time of a plague, honours providence; therefore they that trust in God in such a day shall be kept.

Thereby God is engaged to help and deliver. In Psalm xxxvii. last verse, "The Lord shall help them and deliver them, he shall save them because they trust in him; because they trust in him, God is engaged to help and deliver, if men trust in him. So in Isaiah xxvi. 3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Our very trusting in the Lord for deliverance and protection, doth engage God to deliver and protect.

When did God do ever any great thing, but it was put upon faith? Ye read of great victories in the time of the Old Testament, and these were put upon faith: ye read of great cures in the time of the New Testament, and those were put upon faith. When did God do any great

thing, but it was put upon faith? Now to be preserved and protected in the time of a plague, when thousands fall on the right hand and on our left, it is a great matter, next unto a miracle; therefore it must be put upon faith.

Again: God will honour those persons, and those graces most, that honour him most: of all graces faith honours God most, therefore God will honour that most; no wonder, then, that this protection is put upon faith and trusting in the Lord.

One thing more: there lies a blessing in course for all those that put themselves under the wing of the Lord in trusting him. In the second of Ruth, verse 12th, says Boaz to Ruth, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust;" under whose wings thou hast put thyself. It is faith, and faith only, that puts us under the wings of God. Psalm lvii. at the 1st verse, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast:" it is faith that doth put a man under the wing of God. In Psalm xxxvi. 7, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wing." Faith, of all other graces, puts a man under the shadow of God's wing, and there lies a blessing in course, I say, for all those that put themselves under God's wing; therefore no wonder that this great promise of protection and deliverance in the time of a plague is entailed upon trusting in God.

Well, but then, thirdly, what faith is this, what trust is that which God hath promised protection and deliverance to in the time of a plague? what act of faith is it? what faith is it? I answer, first, there is a faith of persuasion, called faith, whereby men are persuaded and verily believe that they shall not die, nor fall by the hand of the plague. This is well; but I do not find in the xcist Psalm, that this protection is entailed upon this persuasion, neither do I find this faith here mentioned.

There is also a faith of reliance, whereby a man doth rely upon God for salvation; this is a justifying faith, true justifying faith; this is true faith indeed: but I do not find in this Psalm, that this promise of protection and deliverance

in the time of a plague is entailed upon this, nor that this is here mentioned.

But again, there is a faith, I may call it a faith of recourse unto God, whereby a man doth betake himself unto God for shelter, for protection, as to his habitation: when other men do run, one this way, another that way, to their hiding-places: in the time of a plague, for a man then to betake himself to God as to his habitation, I think this is the faith that is here spoken of, in this xcist Psalm: for do but mark the words of the Psalm; at the 1st verse, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High," in the hiding-place of the Most High; as if he should say, When others run from the plague and pestilence, and run to their hiding-places, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High," that betakes himself to God as his hiding-place and his habitation, he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, shall be protected. And so at the 9th verse, "Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High thy habitation, there shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling;" as if he should say to us, In time of a plague, men are running and looking out for habitations and hiding-places; but because thou hast made the Lord thy habitation, and hast recourse to him as thy habitation, "no evil shall befal thee, neither shall the plague come nigh thy dwelling:" and again, at the 11th verse it is said, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," the ways of thy calling; as if he should say, In the time of a plague, men will be very apt to leave station and calling, and so run away from the plague and pestilence; but, saith he, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," the ways of thy calling and place; that is, look when a man in the time of a plague shall conscientiously keep his station and place, and betake himself to God as his habitation: this is the faith that is here spoken of, and this is the faith that God hath promised protection to, here in this xcist Psalm.

But you will say then, Is it not lawful to fly in the time of persecution? Yes, without all doubt it is, so you carry God along with you for your habitation, so you make God your habitation still; a man may lawfully seek the preservation of his life and the life of his family.

But stay, the plague is called the hand of God; and can a man flee from the hand of God? Mark a little for answer: the hand of God is either mediate or immediate: suppose that the plague or pestilence were the immediate hand of God, and nothing of nature or infection in it; yet it is lawful to fly; it is lawful to go out of that place where the immediate hand of God rests. In the xvith of Numbers there was an immediate hand of God upon Korah, Dathan and Abiram, for the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up; here was an immediate hand of God: yet the Lord speaks unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, in the 21st verse, "Separate yourselves from amongst this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment;" and at the 24th verse, "Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram;" which was the immediate hand of God, and yet notwithstanding they were to go from among them that the hand of God fell upon, though it were an immediate hand. And in the following part of the chapter the same expression is used for the plague: in the 44th verse, "They murmured, and the Lord struck them with the plague." Well, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, in the 45th verse, "Get you up from amongst this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment:" the same that is said before is said here concerning the plague. So that I say, although the plague were the immediate hand of God, and there were nothing of nature or infection in it, yet it were lawful to fly.

But, again, the plague or pestilence is not so much the hand of God, as if there were no infection in it; for if there were no infection in it, if there were not something of nature in it, it could not be cured by remedies, nothing would do good; therefore it is not so the hand of God as if there were nothing of infection in it; but is called the hand of God, because God's providence hath a special hand in the sending and ordering of it. So now the famine may be called God's hand; God sends it: "I will call for a famine upon the land," says God: a famine is of God's sending, and therefore may I not fly from a famine? Abraham, when there was a famine in the land, went down to Abimelech. Isaac, when there was a famine in the land, went down: and Jacob, when there was a famine in the land, went down to Egypt. And

is it lawful to fly in the time of famine, and is it not lawful to fly in the time of a plague? Certainly the one as well as the other.

But then, you will say, if the Lord hath promised protection and deliverance to those that trust in him in the time of a plague, whether is it possible for a believer to die by a plague, seeing the whole Psalm is made to those; and promise such protection to those that trust in the Lord, whether may a believer die of the plague? Without all doubt he may. Seventy thousand died in David's time; do you think there was not a good man among them? It is recorded of several good men, that they died of the plague; but you know what is said, "All things fall alike to good and bad:" if a good man may not die of the plague, how can all things fall alike to good and bad?

But how then is the promise fulfilled, if that a believer may die by the hand of a plague? Yes, very well; for possibly a believer may be out of his way, as good Josiah was, and died, though God promised him that he should die in peace. No disparagement to the promise, for he was out of his way; and this promise of protection in the time of a plague is made to those believers that are in God's way; "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways;" therefore if a believer be out of God's way and die, it is no disparagement to this promise.

But, again, you must know that this promise of protection and deliverance is not made to a believer as a believer, but as acting and exercising faith; for though a man be a believer, if he do not act and exercise his faith, this promise will not reach him; therefore if a believer die, not exercising faith and trusting in God, no disparagement to the promise.

Again, you must know that this promise is not made to a believer barely exercising and acting faith; but such an act of faith and such an act of trust as you have heard of: therefore, though a believer die, and die exercising some faith, yet this promise is fulfilled, for it is made to such an act of faith as you have heard of.

But then again, further, you must know this promise is not made to a believer absolutely, but in opposition to the wicked; therefore it is said, the Lord having promised this to a believer, "that no evil should befal him, though a thou-

sand should fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand;" at the 8th verse, it is said, so Montanus, rather than *only but*, "with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked:" as if he should say, Though this or that particular believer die of the plague, believers shall outlive the wicked and be last upon the ground, and they shall see the reward of the wicked; they shall see this judgment sweep away the ungodly.

But again, further, if I should interpret this as Austin doth in the ist of John, concerning Christ, where it is said, "He enlightens every one that comes into the world;" that is, says Austin, all that are enlightened are enlightened by him. As you say of a schoolmaster in a town, This schoolmaster teaches all the boys in the town; not that he teaches every particular boy in the town, but that all that are taught are taught by him. So, says he, Christ enlightens every one that comes into the world; that is, all that are enlightened are enlightened by him. So here the Lord doth promise protection and deliverance to all those that do believe in the time of a plague; that is, all that have protection and deliverance, in the time of a plague, have it from him.

But to end this, I do think that this xcist Psalm doth hold forth a promise of special protection in the time of a plague, for believers. The scope of it is not, that every particular believer shall not die; but the drift and scope of the Psalm is, to hold forth a *speciality of protection* for believers in the time of a plague. For as the time of a plague is a time of special danger; so God hath given out a special promise, and there shall be a speciality of protection for his people in the time of this danger; and that is the meaning of this place.

Well, but how, and by what means will God protect and deliver those that trust in him in the time of a plague?

For that I shall say only thus much; he will do it by the ministration of angels: especially by the ministration of angels. When angels go forth to destroy, then angels must go forth to deliver, seal, and secure: as in the viith of the Revelation, and 1st verse, "After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw an-

other angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying, Hurt not," &c. When angels go forth to hurt, then angels must go forth to seal, and save, and protect. Now in the time of a plague, angels go forth to destroy; therefore saith the Lord here, "I will give my angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against the stone." Have I given my angels commission to destroy? I have given my angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. Thus now men shall be preserved and delivered in the time of a plague, by the ministry of angels. And so you have the words opened.

Now to bring things home to ourselves by way of application. Here we may see what is our work, our great work in this day. The day we are fallen into is a dark day, a day of the plague and the pestilence: it is good for us to inquire what our work is; it is good at all times, but now especially, to inquire what our work is. Oh, what is my work this day? Now the work of this day, our work is to trust in the Lord; this is the work that protection and deliverance in the time of a plague is entailed upon. Who is there that does not desire to be protected and delivered from this plague? Oh, that I and my family may be preserved! Behold here your antidote to keep you from the plague: Trust in the Lord, as ever you and your family may be protected now in this evil day. Trust in the Lord, and call upon yours to trust in the Lord.

But what shall we do that we may trust in the Lord in this day of the plague? First of all, you must repent of your own sins, and be sorrowful for the sins of others, and of the times wherein you live. When the plague came in David's time, you know what David did, he repented: "Lord," says he, "I have done foolishly: as for these sheep, what have they done? It is I, Lord, it is I." So let every one do: this God expects in the time of a plague. In the ivth chapter of Amos, says the Lord there, in the 10th verse, "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword; and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your

camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord." When God sends the pestilence, then he expects that men and women should return unto him: repent and return unto him. In the ixth of Ezekiel, those that sigh and mourn for the abominations, they are marked, when men go into the city with their destroying weapons. Those that sigh and mourn for the evil of the times, they are the marked men. They are not marked for deliverance, that do abstain from sin; a man may be given to drunkenness, and may leave his drunkenness, but that will not bring him under the mark: men are not brought under the mark for deliverance, that do repent of their own sin; but the mark is set upon those that do mourn for other men's sins. But now I put both together; if you trust in the Lord in this evil day, in the time of a plague, repent for your own sins, and mourn for the sins of others. For how can I trust in the Lord for protection, if I do not repent of my sins? If I live in any sin, and do not turn from all my evil ways, how can I trust in the Lord? I cannot do it; therefore repent and be sorrowful for your own sins, and for the sins of others.

Again, get assurance of your interest in Christ. Christ is our great High Priest that makes the atonement, as Aaron did in the time of a plague; it is by the ministry of angels especially, that we are kept in the time of a plague. Now says our Saviour Christ to Nathaniel, "Because I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." The angels ascend and descend upon Christ. All the ministry of angels is upon Christ's account, and you are preserved and protected in the time of a plague by the ministration of angels. What then? Get an interest in Christ, and if you doubt of your interest, get assurance, do not let that slip now. Now get an interest in Christ, now get assurance.

Again, go to God to make good this promise. In this xcist Psalm, if you do but mind it, the Lord doth not only promise protection and deliverance from the plague to those that trust in him, but he promises grace to trust in him; he

promises protection upon condition that you trust in him, and he promises you grace also to trust in him. Saith he, at the 5th verse, "Art thou afraid, and canst not trust in me?" "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day." At the 4th verse, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: thou shalt not be afraid," &c. Thou shalt be secure, and I will keep thee from fear. The Lord that hath promised protection in the time of a plague, hath also promised freedom from fear, and grace to trust in him; therefore go to God for this grace, go to him to make good this promise.

Then again, further, consider what motives ye have to trust in God in the time of a plague. You will say, What arguments or motives have we in the consideration whereof we may be moved to trust in God in a time of a plague? There are many; give me leave a little, that we may help one another's faith in this needful day.

First of all, though the destroyer be abroad, yet there is a man with his pen and ink-horn by his side also abroad, and that man is your friend, it is Christ; as you read in the ixth of Ezekiel, there goes a man out with a pen and ink-horn by his side, to mark those that sigh, and mourn, and cry for the abominations that are done. Now to this man, Christ is a friend, and therefore why should not you believe? why should you not trust in the Lord?

But, again, if that the Lord do know those that do trust in him in the time of a plague, why should you not trust in him? In the first chapter of Nahum you find very great expressions of God's anger and indignation. It is said at the second verse, "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies, &c." At the fifth verse, "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence; yea, the world and all that dwell therein; who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him." What then? In the 7th verse, "The Lord is good, a strong-hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him." The Lord

when he is angry doth distinguish betwixt those that trust in him, and those that do not trust in him. If a man be angry and in fury, he strikes any that comes in his way, he does not know his friends from his enemies; but the Lord knows them that trust in him, though he be angry, and in fury, and in indignation, yet he knows them that trust in him; and therefore why should ye not trust in the Lord in the day of a plague?

Again, if that a plague and pestilence do make room for God's people, why should ye not trust in the Lord in the time of a plague? what, think you, should be the meaning of that which we read in the iiird of Habakkuk? "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet." When was this? It was when God led his people into Canaan: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise; before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet." He sent the pestilence among the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites to consume them, and make way for his people. God can send a pestilence into a city, to make room for his people, and to take off persecution. You see you have scripture for it: "Before him went the pestilence." Now, I say, if God by a pestilence can, and doth, and will make room for his people, why should not ye, who are the people of God, trust in the Lord in the day of a plague?

Again, if there be mercy with the Lord in the time of a plague, if God be ready to be entreated, and to receive atonement, and to show mercy unto his people, why then should not you trust in the Lord in the time of a plague? Now I pray look upon the story of David's time, and you may see how ready God was to show mercy in the day of a plague. First of all, upon that ground, God told David where the temple should be built, which he never told him before: but, secondly, look into the story, and you will see what abatement there is; how God threatened and abates. There was threatened seven years famine, and observe two abatements: 1 Chron. xxi. 12. God came to David, and said, Thus saith the Lord, choose thee either three years famine, &c. In the 2 Samuel xxiv, it is seven years famine: in the 13th verse, "God came to David and told him, and said

unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land, or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies?" Seven years of famine, says one place, three years of famine, says the other: Why? because God abates. Well, but there is a great abatement if you look upon the business of the plague. The Lord gave David his choice; "Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land, or wilt thou fly three months before thine enemies, or that there be three days pestilence in thy land?" Well, at the 15th verse, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, "So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed." The time appointed, how long was that? What, three days? no, there was abatement; how doth that appear? "So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed;" even to the evening sacrifice, for so it signifies. But how do you prove that it did not last three days? By two reasons, says Peter Martyr; one, because it is said, "The Lord repented him of the evil:" and another, because, says he, at the 16th verse, "When the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him;" Why? if the three days had been at an end, the angel would not have stretched out his hand to have destroyed Jerusalem: therefore the angel still putting forth his hand to destroy, shows that the three days were not an end; so that there was an abatement. I speak it to show God's readiness to abate, and to show mercy in the time of a plague.

Again, you may observe here in this story, that when the plague came to Jerusalem, which was the most populous place, there it stayed: at the 16th verse, "And when the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil." When it came to the most populous place, where it was most likely to be infective, there it stayed: see the readiness of God to show mercy.

But, further, you may observe, if you look into this story, that the Lord repented him, and gave commandment for the staying of the pestilence before David repented. I confess there is somewhat of his repentance before. But afterwards, "David said unto God (1 Chron. xxi. 17.), Is it not I that have commanded the people to be numbered, even I? it is I that have sinned, and done evil indeed, let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord, my God, be on me and on my

father's house, but not on this people, that they should be plagued. David lift up his eyes (in the 16th verse) and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over against Jerusalem." And then follows that speech of David. But if you look before, you shall find the Lord made an abatement before this speech of his; before this humiliation of his; the Lord shewed mercy, and gave him his choice before, in the second of Samuel, xxiv. 16, "And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough, stay now thine hand; and the angel of the Lord was by the threshing-floor of Araunath the Jebusite. And David spake unto the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have said, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me and against my father's house," at the 17th verse; but the Lord repented him, at the 16th verse; as if the Lord did prevent David's repentance with his loving kindness; before his full repentance came out, the Lord gave commission to stay the plague: look well upon this story, and you may see how ready the Lord is to shew mercy, and be entreated by his people in the time of a plague.

But, again, if this promise in Psalm xci., which is nothing else but a promise in the time of a plague; if this promise be full, and certain, and solid, as it may obviate all our fears and objections; why then should we not trust in the Lord in the time of a plague? Now do but mark the Psalm, and you shall see the words are so said as may obviate all your fears and objections.

Will you say, The destroying angels are now abroad, the arrows of the Almighty are now about us? Says he, "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Will you say, Aye, but hundreds fall on this side and on the other side, and thousands may quickly? then says he, "Yet it shall not come nigh thee: there shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," verses 7, 10.

Will you say, Oh, but this same disease of the plague, it is

like a lion and an adder, and as a young lion and dragon; yet, saith he, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder, and the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under thy feet," in the 13th verse.

Will you say, Oh, but suppose the plague should come, all my friends would leave me; I shall be left all alone, and what shall become of me then? Why, says he, at the 15th verse, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble:" spoken in regard of the plague; I am of Molerus' mind, that the whole Psalm relates to the plague.

Will you say, Oh, but I cannot believe this; there is no likelihood that I should escape in a general plague. Mark what he says in the last verse: "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation:" it shall be my salvation; thou shalt not be saved by second causes, but it shall be my salvation. And in the 3rd verse, saith he, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, from the noisome pestilence." Do not doubt it, surely he shall deliver thee. The words of this Psalm are so said, as to take off, and to obviate all our objections and fears; therefore why should we not trust in the Lord in the time of a plague?

But you will say, then, How shall this work of faith and trusting in the Lord be carried on? I shall say no more in it, but only two or three things from this Psalm. It must be carried on with love to God, knowledge of his name, and prayer. In the 14th verse, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him." As you must believe and trust in God, so you must set your love on God; and, says he, "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." Here are three things; love to God, knowledge of his name, and prayer; your faith and trust in such a day must go along with these three: some say, they do believe and trust in God, but they do not set their love upon God; some say they love him but do not know his name, that whereby God is distinguished and worshipped; some say they know God's name, but they do not pray. But, now, if you would carry on your faith and trust in the Lord as you ought to do, your trusting in the Lord must be carried on with love to God, knowledge of his name, and prayer.

Again, go on in your way, christians, do not start out of your way; "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to

keep thee in all thy ways:" in all thy ways, the ways of thy calling: take heed you be not found out of your way, that the plague does not find you out of your way, look that you do not start out of your way.

Again, and so to end; go to God, and tell the Lord that you do trust in him, and make him your habitation; "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, (in the Hebrew, I will say *to* the Lord,) My refuge, my fortress, my God, in him will I trust." It is not enough to trust in the Lord, but you must go to God and tell him, that you do trust in him, that you make him your habitation; say, Lord, I make thee my habitation, I trust in thee, thou art my refuge, and my fortress, in thee do I trust.

PSALM XCI.

11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

"FOR he shall give his angels charge over thee," &c. Having treated of this Psalm already, I shall not spend much time in showing you the coherence of these words with the former; you see they are brought in with a *for;* "For he shall give his angels charge over thee," as giving an account and reason of that which was said before. In the former part of the Psalm, you read of the saint's protection in, and their deliverance from, the plague and pestilence in the day thereof. At the tenth verse, "There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Why? "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." &c. So that here still you have the promise of protection in the time of the plague and pestilence; the means whereby God will protect and deliver. The condition of this promise in these words, "Keep thee in all thy ways." So that though the danger of the plague and pestilence be never so great, yet if we be found in our ways, God's angels, under Him, shall be our pro-

tection. "He shall give his angels charge over thee," &c. In which words, you may read the special and singular care and providence of God over his people in the time of plague and pestilence, to be managed by the hands of angels. God will take special order with the angels, for the safety of his people in the time of the plague and pestilence.

For the clearing of which argument, three things will fall under our consideration. First. That God hath singular care and providence over his children. Secondly. That this care and providence is managed by the hands of angels. Thirdly. That this and all this, is and shall be exerted and drawn out especially in the time of the plague and pestilence.

As for the first, it is so full and clear in the words, that I shall need go no further. He doth not say that God will provide for his people in the general, but there is a singular and special care and providence that God hath for his people. For if you mind the words: first, he says, "He will give his angels charge over thee." Charge; charge is a strict command, more than a bare command, as when you would have a servant do a business certainly and fully, you lay a charge upon him, I charge you that you do not neglect that business; you do not barely tell what he should do, prescribe him his work, but you charge him to do it. So says the Lord unto the angels, My servants or children, now they are in the plague and pestilence, O my angels, I charge you, stir not from their houses, I charge you stir not from such an one's bed-side; it is a charge, "He shall give his angels charge."

Further, he doth not only, and will not only charge his angel, but his angels; not one angel charged with the safety of his people, but many angels, for their better guard and security, "He shall give his angels charge."

And again, "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee;" to keep thee; charge over thee, and to keep thee; not only over the whole church of God, but over every particular member of the church of God; "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:" this is his marvellous care.

Well, but besides this, "He will give his angels charge to keep thee in all thy ways;" not in some of thy ways, but in all thy ways. As God's providence is particular in

regard of our persons, so it is universal in regard of our ways. "He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee," not in some, but "in all thy ways."

But is this all? No; "They shall bear thee up in their hands," as every servant desires and loves to take up the young heir, or the young master into his arms, so the angels. It is a great matter, that the Lord promiseth to pitch his tents. "And the angels of the Lord shall pitch their tents round about them that fear him;" but here is more; the angels shall not only pitch their tents, be their guard, but their nurses, to bear them up in their hands: but why? "That thou dash not thy foot against a stone." When children begin to go, they are very apt to fall, and get many a knock; to stumble at every little stone. Now there are many stones of stumbling that are in our way, and we are very apt to fall and miscarry; but such is the goodness of God, the providence of God, the goodness of his providence, that as he hath provided his angels to be our guard, in opposition to all our foreign enemies; so he hath provided his angels to be our nurses, in opposition to all our weaknesses and infirmities, that we get no hurt, that we miscarry not in the least, "That we dash not our foot against a stone." Oh! how tender is the Lord of his? In other Scriptures you know the Lord is said to keep his people as the apple of his eye: what is a man more tender of than the apple of his eye? and when doth the Lord keep his people as the apple of his eye, but when they are lowest and in the worst condition? In the xxxiind of Deuteronomy, verse 10th, "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste and howling wilderness: he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." When they came out of Egypt, and when they were in the howling wilderness, the Lord did keep his people then as the apple of his eye: and if you look into the iind of Zechariah, you shall find he did the same when they came out of Babylon, Zech. ii. 6. "Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the North, deliver thyself, oh Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon." There were some that staid still behind, that were so wedded to their houses there they would not stir out of Babylon, some of the worst of them; concerning these, he says at the eighth verse, "After the glory hath he sent me to the nations

which spoiled you; for, he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." Sinful, poor, unworthy people, that would not go home when they might, would not go out of Babylon when they might; yet how tender was the Lord of them! But I say, I shall need go no further than the text: the Lord hath said it, that "He will give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways, that you dash not your foot against a stone." So that thus then you see the singular care and providence of God over his servants and children. That is the first.

But then, secondly, this care and providence of his is managed by the hands of angels; the angels are the people that are especially betrusted with this protection of the saints. Mistake not; not as if the Lord himself did quit his hands of their protection; though the angels should be our protection, yet if God should withdraw his protection and presence, we could not be satisfied with the protection of angels. Look into the xxxiiird of Exodus, and you shall see there how the Lord, by Moses, tells the people he would send an angel before them: "I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people: lest I consume thee in the way:" what then? "and when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put on him his ornaments," when they heard these evil tidings; what, was this evil tidings, that their enemies should all be driven out before them, and that God would honour them with an angel to go before them? yes, they called this evil tidings, because they had not the Lord himself, to go before them. So that the bare presence of angels without the Lord himself, could not satisfy a gracious soul; still, therefore, God himself is our great protector: and therefore the angels are said to be sent forth; are they not all ministering spirits sent forth? and who is it that doth send them forth? He whose they are; whose are they? they are called in the first of the Hebrews, "the angels of God;" and the text says they are his angels, his: indeed in the eighteenth of Matthew, they are called the saints, angels; "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones (10th

verse) for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels," &c. their angels, and yet his angels; theirs in regard of profit, for they are sent forth for the good of the elect: but his in regard of authority, they are his servants, his ministers. So that I say still, though the angels have the management of this protection, yet God is the protector of his people: but yet I say, though God be our great protector, and God doth not quit his hands of this protection; yet he hath betrusted the protection of the saints very much in the hands of the angels; and therefore they are called cherubims; and wherefore are they called cherubims? Because they do hide and protect. Upon this acccount the king of Tyrus is called a cherub, in that place of Ezekiel, because of his hiding and protecting the people that were under him. And the angels have wings, not only for their swiftness, but for protection, the wing being for protection, as well as to fly with. So that I say, though God be the great protector of his people, yet that protection lies much on the hands of angels.

But what need God make use of angels to protect his people? he is able to do it alone; and is it not for God's dishonour to make use of them for the protection of his people? No, it is for the honour of God, for the more honourable the servants are, the instruments are, that a king or prince doth use for the protecting of his people, the more honourable is that king or prince. Now the angels, they are honourable creatures; frequently they are called gods: "thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." In the Hebrew it is "a little lower than the gods, worship him all ye gods, (in the Hebrew) all ye angels." Well! but why are the angels called into this protection, into this nursery, into this ministry; God hath several creatures that he can use to protect and safe-guard his people; why are the angels in a special manner called into this work of protection of the saints?

They are the fittest people in the world for this employment; fittest in regard of themselves, fittest in regard of the saints. They are fittest in regard of themselves, for, first, they are an exceeding strong and potent people: who more fit to look to, and care for the concernments of the saints and people of God, than those that are strong and potent? It is said of the angels in the ciiird Psalm, that they excel in

strength; "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength," verse 20. They are called powers in the host of God, they are the chariots and the horsemen, in Psalm lxviii. 17, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels;" thousands of angels: they are the chariots and horsemen in the host of God: other foot-companies he hath, but his chariots and horsemen, they are the angels. One angel, you know, destroyed a hundred and fourscore thousand of the host of Assyria in a night; as one constable will scare away twenty thieves, so one good angel, invested with God's authority, is able to drive away a thousand evil angels, devils: they are an exceeding strong and potent people.

2. As they are an exceeding strong and potent people; so they are a very knowing, and a wise people: and who so fit to manage the affairs and concerns of the saints, and people of God, and to protect and defend them as a knowing and understanding people? Such are the angels: the devils indeed, they are called knowing; but the angels, good angels, they are called intelligencers: you know what Joab said to David; "Thou art for wisdom as an angel of God." Says our Saviour, "No man knoweth that day and time, no, not the angels in heaven;" as if the angels in heaven knew every secret, and were acquainted with every hidden thing: they are an exceeding knowing people, very prudent, and very wise.

3. As they are an exceeding knowing and wise people, so they are also exceeding active and expeditious, quick in dispatches, who more fit to protect and defend the saints and people of God, than those that are active, expedite, and quick in their dispatches? such are the angels. In the first of Ezekiel ye read that every one had four wings; why? because of their great activity and expedition, and the quick dispatch they make in all their affairs.

4. As they are an active and expeditious people, so they are a people very faithful both to God and man; in the ciiird Psalm, they are ready to do God's will, and not only ready to fulfil God's will, but they do it; "Bless the Lord, all ye his angels that excel in strength, (verse 20,) that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure." They are very faithful; and who so fit to do th

work, to attend and look to the concernments of the saints and people of God, as those that are faithful.

5. As they are an exceeding faithful people, so they are a people that are very loving to the saints and children of God, very loving; otherwise they were not fit to be their nurses: what is a nurse without love? They are loving to the saints. "Do it not, (said the angel unto John) I am thy fellow-servant;" do not give divine worship to me, I am thy fellow-servant; fellow-servants are loving to one another; they are fellow-servants with the saints. Are the saints and people of God members of Christ, and is Christ their head? so is Christ the Lord of angels; he is the Lord of angels, and they follow him. In Zech. i. 8, "I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom;" these myrtle trees in the bottom, are saints in a low condition; "And, behold, a man riding upon a red horse," this is Christ; "and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him there were red horses, speckled and white;" behind him; mark who are these red horses, speckled and white, in the 9th verse, "Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? and the angel that talked with me, said unto me, I will show thee what these be, and the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, these are they, whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth." These are the angels that stand behind Christ, that are the followers of Christ; they are his followers: the more union there is betwixt persons, the more they love; and as the union is, such is the love. If there be a natural union betwixt persons, their love will be natural; if their union be civil, political, their love will be political, civil; if the union be spiritual, ecclesiastical, the love is spiritual, ecclesiastical, more than natural. Now the union that is betwixt the angels and the saints, it is a church union. "Ye are come," says the apostle, in Heb. xii. 22, "unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born:" so that they are of the same church, the general assembly and church of the first-born, and therefore they must needs be an exceeding loving people to the saints and people of God, and therefore a people fit for this em-

ployment, of all other the fittest for this employment, to be employed under God for the protection of the saints, fittest in regard of themselves.

But then again, fittest they are for this employment in regard of the saints; for who more fit to be employed in this protection under God, the protection of the saints, than those that are in some respect above the saints, and in some respect beneath them: if a nurse be above the child, she may despise it; if the child be altogether above the nurse, the nurse cannot rule it. Now the angels, they are in some respect beneath and in some respect above the saints; they are above the saints in regard of their nature, as you all know; but in some respects they are beneath the saints and below the saints: for the second person did not come into their nature, as he did into the nature of the saints; he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham: and in that respect the saints are above them; and the saints are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, such a garment as never came upon the back of an angel, herein the saints are above the angels: and the saints and people of God, they are members of Christ, and therein above the angels; Christ is the Lord of angels, but you do not read that the angels are the members of Christ. So that I say, in some respect the angels are beneath the saints, and in some respect above them; and so the more fit for this employment. Ye see how it is with a mean man that sits at dinner at a nobleman's table; he sits down at the table with the nobleman, and the servants of the nobleman, they attend upon him; may be the servants are better men than he, but because he sits down at the nobleman's table, these servants attend upon him, as upon their master. Now the saints and people of God are members of Christ, they have communion with Christ, and sit down at his table: and therefore his followers the angels, they attend upon the saints and people of God: and thus now ye see why the angels are in a special manner called to this work of protection of the saints and people of God.

Well, but then, thirdly, Why are the angels called to this work of protection of the saints, especially in the time of plague and pestilence? why doth the Lord give a special charge to his angels to have a special care of his people in

the time of the plague and pestilence, why at that time especially?

First of all, that time is a time of the greatest danger; when should the nurse look unto the child, if not in the greatest danger? Now in the time of the greatest danger, then come the angels to the succour of God's people. In the xxxiind chapter of Genesis, we read of the angels meeting of Jacob, at the 1st verse, "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host;" they met him then; why then? he had a vision when he went out from his country, a promise in the way of a vision, the angels ascending and descending, and now he had the promise accomplished upon his return; why then? then he was in the greatest danger, he was betwixt Laban and Esau; and though he had passed the pikes of Laban, yet now he was to meet an old provoked enemy, a wicked man, Esau; insomuch that he was grievously afraid, and he prayed, "Lord, deliver me from the hand of my brother;" well, and what then? then come the angels; then comes this great danger, and then come the angels, "and he called the name of the place Mahanaim;" it is the same expression that is used in the vith chapter of the Canticles, concerning the Jews returning unto their own country, at the 13th verse, "Return, return, oh Shulamite, return, return, that we may look upon thee:" what will ye see in the Shulamite? in the Jews returning, as it were the company of Mahanaims; Mahanaims; two armies you read it, but it is the same word: why? possibly to show that God will send a host of angels to guard the Jews into their country, as he sent a host of angels to guard their father Jacob into his country. But I bring this to show that when the saints and people of God are in greatest danger, then come the angels to succour them. Now the time of sickness and of the plague is a time of great danger.

2. Look when all visible means and helps fail, then is a fit time for invisible help to come in. Now the help of the angel is invisible, his hands are under his wings; you cannot see his help. When all visible means and helps fail, then comes God's invisible help, then come the angels, a fit time for the angels.

But, 3. Look when the destroying angel is abroad, then

is a fit time for the protecting angel to step in, and be at work. Now in the time of the plague and pestilence, the destroying angel is abroad; only here then this question doth arise, whether the destroying angel and the protecting angel differ; whether they be divers, or the same? I shall resolve it in two or three positions.

Although the same angel may destroy and spare, as in David's time; yet the destroying angel and the protecting angel seem to be divers. In the viith of Revelation, four angels came out to hurt, and another angel came out to save. In the ixth of Ezekiel, six men came out with their slaughter-weapons in their hands, and another came out to mark.

Another position is this. As the destroying and protecting angel may seem to be divers, so God doth sometimes employ an evil angel to afflict and destroy good men, and doth sometimes employ a good angel to afflict and destroy bad men. Sometimes God doth employ a good angel to afflict and destroy wicked men, as in the case of Sodom; they were good angels that destroyed Sodom. Sometimes on the other side, God doth employ evil angels to afflict, and (shall I use the word?) destroy good men: the devil wasted Job, and killed his children.

But, again, though the angels may be thus employed, the destroyer and the protector; yet this is certain, that all protection of the saints falls into the hands and the lap of the good angels, "for he shall give his angels charge over thee;" his, why his? in distinction from the devils, and evil angels, that did not stay by him, but left him in the time of their apostasy: and "they shall bear thee in their arms." Devils do not bear the saints in their arms; therefore the business of the saints' protection, this falls wholly upon the good angels to do: but look, I say, when the destroying angel is abroad, then is a fit time for the protecting angel to be abroad too. Now in the time of the plague and pestilence, the destroying angel is abroad; therefore then especially is the good angel to be at work for the protection of the saints.

4. The time of the plague, is a time when the saints and people of God may want outward provision; good people may be shut up and starved for want of victuals, in the time of the plague. Now *it is* the work of the good angels to provide meat and victuals for the people of God sometimes.

In 1 Kings xix. 5, it is said of Elijah, that "as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat: and he looked, and behold there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruise of water at his head; and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee," &c.

5. The time of the plague and pestilence, as it is a time of want, want of provision, so it is a time when many of God's people are put to go for it, to fly for it, to run for it, to seek abroad for their houses and habitations, do not know which way to go: it is the work of a good angel to go before them, to order and direct their way. In Gen. xxiv. 7, says Abraham to his servant, "He shall send his angel before thee." It is the work of a good angel to order, and direct, and guide the people of God in their way.

6. The time of the plague and pestilence is a time when people need physicians and surgeons, surgeons and physicians against their malady. A good angel can do this, and sometimes doth it. In John v. 4, "For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." This is the work of an angel, to prepare a medicine; this is the work of an angel.

Aye, but you will say, all these instances are extraordinary; what is this to me in this time of the plague and sickness, what is this to me? these are extraordinary things, does their ministry still continue or no?

Mark, yes, certainly; the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge: and how God was the God of Jacob, and how his refuge, ye heard even now: in Heb. i. 7, it is said, "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;" who maketh, in the present tense, as if it were always a doing; not, who hath made, but, who maketh; "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire:" it is the present tense, it is continually doing: and if you look into the Old Testament, and compare the cherubims that were in the tabernacle with the cherubims that were in the temple, you shall find

that the cherubims that were in the tabernacle were but two, and the cherubims that were in the temple were four; why? but to shew that their protection shall rather be enlarged than lessened. In the ist chapter of John, says our Saviour Christ there to Nathaniel, at the last verse, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Hereafter; this is a gospel truth, and the more you know and see the mystery of the gospel revealed, the more will this mystery be revealed to you; "Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending," &c.; hereafter, in gospel times. And pray mark the words of the text, "He shall give his angels charge over thee." Over thee; say you, I confess this is a comfortable truth, the protection of angels in the time of the plague and pestilence especially, but what is this to me? Yes, says he, "He shall give his angels charge over thee," over thee. Now pray tell me, when you read the commandments, "Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt do no murder;" do ye think that the *thou* there doth belong to you? Yes: I dare not steal, I dare not do any murder, I dare not commit adultery; for it is said, "Thou shalt not murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal;" and this *thou* belongs to me. And why should not the *thee* of the promise belong to you, as well as the *thou* of the commandment? Oh, that those that are afflicted and troubled in conscience would think but of this one thing! If thou concernest thyself in the *thou* of the commandment, thou art concerned in the *thee* of the promise; the *thee* of the promise concerns thee as certainly as the *thou* of the commandment: and thus now ye see I have gone through the doctrine. The Lord hath a singular care and providence over his people, especially in the time of the plague and pestilence, which is managed by the hands of angels. God will take special order with the angels for the safety of his people in the time of the plague and pestilence.

Now I come to the application.

1. If these things be so, great is the dignity of the saints, of the saints here on earth, though never so much despised by the world: they are attended with angels, they have angels for their attendants: is it not an honour to have such attendants as these? The great ones of the earth think it an ho-

nour to have a company of glittering fellows attending upon them, and following them in reds and ribbands, and gold and silver laces. Oh, the beggarly attendants of this earth, unto the attendants the saints have; glorious angels attend them. It was much that Paul spake: "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas," all are yours: Pauls, or Appolloses, or Cephases; why, what are they? they are ministers, and ministers are called angels, angels of the churches. But not only these angels are the saints' attendants, but heavenly angels are the saints' attendants. Ah, what dignity, what honour is here? Who dare despise any of the saints or people of God, although they be never so mean? You see what our Saviour saith, Matt. xviii. 10, "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." That is the first.

2. If these things be so, why then surely the highest enjoyment, and the meanest employment commanded, may and can stand together: what meaner employment than to attend upon a man that hath a plague-sore running upon him? this the angels are to do; and they have the highest enjoyment at the same time; says he, after, "They always behold the face of my Father." So that then our highest enjoyments, and meanest employment commanded, may and can stand together. It may be you say, I will not go to my calling, it is a poor and mean calling, I shall not enjoy God in it. Aye, but know this, you may enjoy God in the lowest employment. The highest enjoyment, and the meanest employment commanded, may and can stand together. That is the second.

3. If these things be so, great is the saint's security, great is the saint's safety. Are they not in safe hands that are in the hands of angels? not of one angel, but many angels: if this be not enough, why the angels bear them up in their arms: if this be not enough, God himself carries them in his arms, as in the days of old; God's eye is upon them, his ear is open to their cry: Christ's left hand is under their head, and his right hand doth embrace them, all the angels attending upon them. Oh, the safety and security of the saints and people of God, even in the worst of times—in the time of the plague and pestilence!

4. If these things be so, how good and gracious is the Lord

unto you; you that are the saints and people of God, how good and gracious is the Lord to you! No sooner had David said, Psalm xxxiv. 7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them:" but the next words he subjoins, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good." Aye, here you may taste and see the goodness of the Lord indeed, in the ministration of angels; that the angels nurse you, and carry you up and down in their arms: the more you look into this, the more you will see how good and gracious the Lord is. In the viiith Psalm, when David had considered the creatures around, "Lord, (says he) what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him; for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels," for a time: "all sheep and oxen, and all creatures thou hast put under his feet:" he begins the Psalm thus, "Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" and because his heart was full of the sense of God's love, he ends the Psalm with the same words, "Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" aye, this is a taking thing indeed; here you may see how gracious and good the Lord is to you.

5. If these things be so, how infinitely are we all beholden unto Jesus Christ, upon whose account it is that the angels are your attendants in this time of the plague and sickness; he is the ladder that Jacob saw: Christ explains that ladder himself; "You shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man:" it is upon Christ's account, all the ministry of angels is upon Christ's account: here you have more than Adam had in the state of innocency; when Adam fell, then you read indeed of the cherubims set to keep the tree of life, to keep Paradise; but you do not read that before the fall he had the angels to minister to him; but now, in and by Jesus Christ, we have the ministration of angels, we are reconciled unto all the angels, and not only so, but they are brought in to be our attendants. Oh, blessed be God for Christ! why should we not say, "I love thee dearly, O Lord my Saviour, by whom I am made partaker of this infinite privilege of the ministration of angels."

6. If these things be so, what a mighty difference is there betwixt the godly and the wicked, even in the time of the

plague. Your great desire in this sickness-time is, that God would make a difference betwixt the one and the other: whatever outward difference there is, I am sure there is this difference, the saints and people of God have the angels to attend upon them, but the wicked have not. The corn and the weeds are cut down by the same scythe, one stroke cuts them both down, but the corn and the weeds are differenced. Two men, a godly man and a wicked man, lay sick of the plague at the same time; the wicked man hath little or no attendance, when his friends leave him it may be he hath nobody to attend him, except it be a halberteer at the door; no angels to attend him: but the good man, when all his friends are gone, then come the angels and comfort him, and attend upon him; and he may comfort himself, and say, Though my friends have left me, yet here are the Lord's angels to look to me and comfort me. What a mighty difference is there betwixt the one and the other! Oh, who would not be godly; who would not get into Christ upon this very account?

7. If these things be so, why, then, why should we not trust in the Lord in this day of great mortality, this sickly time, this time of the plague and pestilence? What, shall the angels be your attendants, now especially, and will not you trust in God? What, have you such a promise as this is, and will not you trust in the Lord? Shall the Lord himself be your protector, and charge his angels with you for such a time as this, and will you not trust in the Lord? It is recorded of Alexander, that being in great danger, and to fight next day with his enemies, he slept very soundly the night before; and he being asked the reason thereof, said, Parmenio wakes; meaning a great and faithful captain of his: Parmenio wakes, says he. The angels are called watchmen; they watch and are faithful, therefore you may be secure, quiet, and at rest: trust in the Lord for ever, upon this account, in this day trust in the Lord.

8. If these things be so, then, friends, why should we not stoop to any work commanded, though it lie much beneath us? Do not you think that the attending upon a sick man, a man that hath a plague-sore running upon him, is a work that lies much beneath angels? yet the angels do it because it is commanded, though much beneath them yet they stoop

to it because it is commanded: and what though a work lie much beneath you, yet if it be commanded, why should you not stoop to it? You will say, Such an one is much beneath me, I will not lay my hand under his shoes, he is much beneath me; ah, but the angels lay their hands under your shoes, and the work they do for you is much beneath them: why should we not be like our attendants? This is angelical obedience; the angels do you many a kindness, and never look for thanks from you, they do many a kindness that you are not aware of: why are you delivered, sometimes you know not how? here is a hand under a wing, the ministration of angels is the cause of it. But, I say, the work they stoop to for you is much beneath them, and therefore why should we not stoop to any work commanded, though it lie much beneath us?

9. If these things be so, friends, what manner of men and women ought we to be in all holy conversation! What, your attendants so holy, and you unholy! Let the women be covered, because of the angels, says the apostle; so say I, let us walk holily because of the angels, they are always about us. If you be in company with a grave man, you will not giggle, nor be so frothy as with others. If a man have a servant attending upon him that is grave and sober, he will not be frothy and vain. Behold what grave and holy attendants there are about you, and will you giggle, and be frothy and vain? Oh, what manner of men and women ought we to be in all holy conversation.

But, 10. To conclude. If these things be so, why should we not always be found in that way, whereby we may come within the compass of this protection? In the xxxivth Psalm it is put upon fearing God, "They shall pitch their tents round about them that fear him." In this Psalm it is put most upon trusting in God. In this xcist Psalm, in this verse, it is put upon (this protection of angels is put upon) being in our way: "They shall bear you up in their hands. He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep you in all your ways." "In all your ways:" your ways: your ways are God's ways, your way is the way commanded by God. If you be out of God's way, you are out of your own way: if you be in your way, the angels shall keep you, even in the time of a plague, and bear you up in their hands, that you

dash not your foot against a stone; but if you be out of your way, I will not insure you of safety. When Balaam went upon the devil's errand, an angel met him and scared his ass, and the ass ran his foot against the wall, dashed his foot against the wall. The promise is, "Thou shalt not dash thy foot against a stone;" but he was out of his way, and the angel met him and scared his ass, and his ass made him rush his leg against the wall. Jonah went out of his way, when he ran away from God; God bade him go one way, and he went another. Well, what then? were the angels with him for his protection? the very sea would not be quiet till he was thrown overboard: instead of angels to protect him, he had a whale to devour him. I confess indeed, through the free grace and mercy of God, the belly of destruction was made a chamber of preservation to him, but he was out of his way; and instead of an angel to keep him that he dash not his foot, his whole body was thrown overboard. Says Solomon, "As a bird from her nest, so is a man out of his place:" so long as the bird is in her nest, it is free from the hawk, it is free from the birding-piece, it is free from the nets, and gins, and snares, as long as it is in her nest; but when the bird is off her nest, then she is exposed to many dangers. So, so long as a man is in his way, in his place and in his way, he is well, and under protection; but when a man is off his nest, out of his place, and out of his way, then is he exposed to all dangers: but, be but in your way, be but in your way, and then you may assure yourselves of divine protection, and of the management thereof, by the hands of angels. Oh, who would not labour always to be in that way which God hath appointed him to be in! why should we not always consider with ourselves, and say, But am I in my way? Old Mr. Dod, being upon the water, and going out of one boat into another, slipped between them, and the first word he spake was this, "Am I in my way?" so we should always be saying, But am I in my way? am I in my way? I am now idling away my time, but *am I in my way?* Oh my soul, *am I in my way?* I am in my calling this day, without prayer in the morning and reading the Scriptures; but am I in my way? Oh my soul, am I in my way? I am now in such frothy company, where I get no good, but hurt; but am I in my way? ever consider this,

am I in my way? you may expect the Lord's protection and the angel's attendance, if you be in your way, but not else. Now then, as ever you desire the protection of the Almighty, and the attendance of angels, especially in this time of danger, sickness, plague and pestilence, let us all labour daily to look to it, that we be found in our way, the way the Lord hath set us in; and what I say to you, I say to myself, and to all, "Wait on the Lord. and keep his way."

END OF VOL. I.

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